NI·ESPOIR·NI·PEUR

MEMOIR

OF

COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT

. . . "On his brest a bloodie crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead, as living, ever him ador'd:
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,
For soveraine hope which in his helpe he had,
Right-faithful true he was in deede and word."

—SPENSER.

HF.B
M763
.16

MEMOIR

OF

COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT

PEER OF FRANCE

DEPUTY FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DOUBS

A CHAPTER OF RECENT FRENCH HISTORY

BY

MRS OLIPHANT

AUTHOR OF THE 'LIFE OF EDWARD IRVING,'
'S. FRANCIS OF ASSISI,' ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES

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MEMOIR

OF

COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT.

CHAPTER XI.

PRIVATE SENTIMENTS AND OPINIONS.

After having thus far traced the beginning of Montalembert's more mature and serious work in literature and politics, we may now pause to show what were his private sentiments and modes of expressing himself both on public and private subjects. The first quotation we will make is from a letter to Lacordaire, in which he discusses one of his favourite questions—*i.e.*, the relative advantages of aristocracy and democracy,—the blessings given by the former to the world, and the prospects afforded by the latter. Lacordaire was himself a demo-

crat, who never agreed with, and never hesitated to attack, what he considered the class prejudices of his friend. This letter is dated Villersexel, 10th December 1839, and is marked by his own hand in red ink as being his answer to "the Abbé Lacordaire upon aristocracy." This, we may remark in passing, as well as all the other letters which passed between the two, is written in that intimate and tender style of *tutoiement* used only by near relations and loving friends—which makes still more remarkable the decided and sometimes almost severe tone of dissent from his friend's opinion taken by the writer.

"It ought to be well understood between us, so far as I am concerned, that I renounce equally the ancient monarchy and the ancient aristocracy, such as our fathers knew them in 1789—that is to say, in a state of degeneration and servitude; in one word, I renounce what is called the *ancien régime*. The partisans who now call themselves Royalists are perfectly aware of this; and the 'Gazette de France,' copying an article from the 'Gazette du Midi,' did me justice solemnly the other day on this point, by the assertion 'that there was not in France an individual more anti-Royalist' than myself. But

in renouncing the *ancien régime* (without hate or injustice, as becomes a Christian), I distinguish it carefully from the ancient Catholic world of Europe, such as it was before the triple invasion in the sixteenth century of the monarchy, the legislative democracy, and Protestantism. This ancient constitution of society, notwithstanding all its crimes and the imperfections which accompanied it, was more favourable than any other to the Catholic Church, and to all the noblest faculties of the soul; and as the dominant political principle of that society was Aristocracy, it follows naturally that I cannot feel for aristocracy the instinctive horror with which it inspires you. On the contrary, the relics of it which are scattered over the surface of Europe fill me with regret and sympathy. So much for the past; for the future I believe (but with much less certainty and confidence) that if we judge according to the rules of human experience up to this time, the triumphant principle of democracy in the modern mind can only maintain itself by means of a hierarchy, and that no hierarchy has ever existed without creating an aristocracy. The Church alone has escaped this necessity, because she alone is founded upon divine institutions, and eternally accompanied by protection from on high. I

believe, then, that modern society will produce a new aristocracy, which will have nothing in common, at least personally, with the old, and which will not be founded upon birth. Like the English aristocracy, it will be within the reach of all whose public services, talents, or acquired fortune raise them above the mass—the only difference from the present condition of affairs will be, that the children of such men, instead of falling back, as at present, into the masses, will remain at the social elevation which was reached by their fathers. But again, as I see no symptoms of this amelioration in the spirit of my country, and as, above all, the first need of that country is the freedom of the Church —a freedom which will certainly not be gained soon, and which claims the self-devotion of all Catholics—I will take good care not to waste my strength and energy on a work less necessary, more uncertain, and much less sacred. As for those who accuse me of entertaining secret motives (*arrière-pensées*), I am as little moved by what they say, as you are when you are accused of an intention to re-establish the Inquisition because you have become a Dominican. I shall, then, continue to regret the past, in so far as it deserves to be regretted; and to despise the present, in so far as it deserves

to be despised—endeavouring at the same time to do justice to both.

"I do not in the least admit your principle, that in order to influence one's age it is necessary to hold it in esteem. It seems to me that the example of all saints and great men worthy of imitation proves exactly the contrary. From St Augustine down to Fénélon, Catholic writers have never ceased to inveigh against their age. It was only in the eighteenth century that philosophers began to profess that admiration for humanity in general, and for their epoch in particular, which in the present day is pushed to the height of folly, and of which God forbid that I should ever become an accomplice. So far as you are concerned, the axioms in which you condense your sentiments upon the social question as connected with the religious question, seem to me irreproachable; but do they go to the bottom of the difference which separates us? I do not think so. All these principles, which you regard as always and in all places Christian (to wit, equality before the law, the throwing open of public posts to all who are qualified to fill them, the payment of taxes by all, the right of being judged by national tribunals), whence do they come if it is not from the hands of aristocratic England? and who but

the English aristocracy alone have maintained them in Europe? In another place you speak of *the new French people, which alone possesses true vitality nowadays, the vigorous child of an old race,* &c. I too believe in its vitality and vigour, but with less confidence. I am persuaded that God has many misunderstandings and many difficulties in store to moderate the pride which is one of the leading principles of that vitality, and that its final triumph will be attended by many afflictions and insults for Catholics and honest people; and for this reason I anxiously desire that you should maintain an affectionate but impartial neutrality in respect to that triumph. The greatest honour that I can do to modern democracy is to compare it to the invasion of barbarians which overthrew the Roman empire. They too destroyed a corrupt society; they even had a hand indirectly in founding the magnificent edifice of Christendom in the middle ages. But as their victories (like those of modern democracy) were accompanied by innumerable evils and frightful crimes, I see no indication that the bishops or Christians of those times, whose chains they broke and whose empire they founded, either applauded or appealed to them. To sum up all, I believe that the most fatal

thing which could happen to the human race would be the exclusive triumph of any human principle whatsoever, which would involve the triumph of pride, that everlasting enemy of charity and justice. The greatest crime which a Catholic can commit is to associate the eternal and spiritual verities of the faith with the material success of any perishable principle, whatever it may be. This has been done for the monarchy, and we see to what it has brought the Bourbons and their advisers. M. de la Mennais attempted to do the same thing for democracy, and he was swept to instant destruction. It has never yet been attempted to bind religion to the success of the aristocratical principle: but if ever men should attempt that third species of idolatry, I am persuaded that sooner or later a jealous God would convince them of their folly, as He has done to the others."

Very different from this moderate and just reasoning is another letter addressed to Madame Albert de la Ferronays, and of a more private character, which we quote from the 'Récit d'une Sœur,' and which affords amusing evidence of the impetuosity and impatience not unmingled with a tone of sharpness which, in the midst

of all his delightful benignity, romance, and enthusiasm, distinguished Montalembert at all times. The subject of this letter is the supineness of the Abbé Gerbet, "cet ange mystique," who, when he ought to have been confuting Lamennais's last publication, the 'Affaires de Rome,' and writing polemical pamphlets, was tranquilly occupying himself instead with the evangelisation of the village and parish in which was situated the chateau of Boury, the new residence of the Comte de la Ferronays.

"I have read with warm interest all the touching particulars which you give me of the good which the Abbé Gerbet is doing around you. From the bottom of my heart I applaud his good work, but I cannot help saying at the same time that I deplore this continued residence at Boury, and his inaction while he is there. All that you tell me is admirable in itself; but it is not the kind of good which the Abbé Gerbet ought to be doing—it is not his mission; it is the mission of a parish priest—certainly a sublime and admirable vocation, but not his. What would have been thought of your father-in-law if, while foreign minister or ambassador, he had taken it into his head to become a land inspector or superintendent of

indirect taxation, and claimed credit for the service which he rendered to the king in that capacity? There would have been one universal cry against him from all sides, "That is not his business; he has failed in his duty." The same thing is true of the Abbé Gerbet, with all the additional difference of that distance which must always exist between the dignity of a minister of the greatest earthly power and that of a priest, and such a priest as he is. It is not for Boury, nor for any other locality whatsoever, that he ought to labour, but for Rome and for Paris; that is to say, for the world. The Catholic world, the entire Church, demands his services, and not the little parish of Boury or the diocese of Beauvais. She calls for these services especially at a moment when she has just been outraged by the most dangerous of her enemies. When the Abbé de la Mennais struck the Church with his guilty book, all eyes were turned to the Abbé Gerbet and to the Abbé Lacordaire, because all felt that it was their part to avenge their mother. It is not a question of the salvation of five or six souls, but of many thousands, perhaps of many millions, for such discussions as these echo across the ages, and act for good or for harm upon the most distant generations. The Abbé Lacordaire has nobly fulfilled

this duty.* . . . You despise, you tell me, 'the outcries of that mean world which cries out continually without knowing why.' I did not, however, speak of the frivolous world, but of the Catholic world, priests and laymen. I know nothing more worthy of respect, or which claims a hearing with better right. You do me no wrong in thinking that I do not like the *obscurity* of well-doing in which the Abbé Gerbet has taken refuge; certainly I do not like it. It is precisely that obscurity which I find fault with. Has not our Lord said, 'The candle must not be placed under a bushel'? Now Boury is the bushel which covers and conceals the light which God has given to the Abbé Gerbet to light His Church. Take notice that I don't find fault with him for having chosen Boury for his residence (though in my own interest I should have preferred Trelon or Villersexel),† but I do find fault with him for not working there; and I draw from his inactivity the conclusion that this residence is not good for him, and that he ought to change it. I am not afraid of hearing

* In a publication entitled 'Letter sur le Saint-Siège,' which contained a reply to Lamennais's accusations against Rome, but was one of the least successful of Lacordaire's literary performances.

† Two chateaux belonging to the Merode family, which were often occupied by Count de Montalembert.

it said, 'Here is a pleasant sort of friend!' I do not believe that the Abbé Gerbet has a better friend in the world than myself; but I am still more a friend of the Church, and for that reason I reproach him with having sinned against the Church. I am not even sure that his silence does not border upon that which is called *the sin against the Holy Ghost*; but he is a better theologian than I am; he will tell you himself if this is the case."

It may be imagined that such a storm of friendly invective might well surprise the recipient. It is the lightning-shaft out of a clear sky to which we have already referred. This high tone of indignation and condemnation would probably have been intolerable in any one else; but Montalembert had so much gentleness mixed with his impetuosity, so much sympathy in his impatience, so much sweetness along with the harshness, that these outbursts never seem to have alienated a single friend from his side. In the conclusion of the same letter he speaks of his correspondent's remonstrances against his impatient utterances, his "sudden ecstasies and furies. You are perfectly right," he adds; "but I fear they will last, for they are part of my nature." And they did last; but

without ever, so far as we are aware, inflicting any poisoned wound.

This "tirade," however, proves very clearly how entirely the lingering ties of devotion for Lamennais, now fallen and gone astray, had been broken.

There is little to arrest us in the uneventful records of this quiet moment, which was indeed stirred up and stimulated by considerable activity in Parliament, yet not by any of that enthusiastic devotion to a certain object which had swept his life along upon its impetuous current a short time before, and which was again to seize upon him a short time after. His appearances in Parliament are not confined to one subject, nor even to the great cause with which he had identified his life. In everything which concerns the liberties of the country, and, above all, the rights and wrongs of the weak, his voice always made itself heard. Nor was it silent in matters purely political. In no particular did he relinquish his freedom of comment and criticism. His appearance is always that of an "independent member," committed to no policy, seeking no party ends, but maintaining the good, the just, the honourable, in all circumstances and at any cost. The only coercive measure to which he seems to have

lent his support, was a project for conferring upon Government the right to acquire by purchase all historical monuments which belonged to private persons, and ran the risk of being destroyed or injured for private purposes—a most characteristic exception to his universal rule. We cannot better indicate the character of his early Parliamentary career, than by summing it up in the eloquent words of his friend M. Cochin :—

"No lost or desperate cause ever failed to obtain his support. There were three nations in the world exposed to special oppression—Poland by Russia, Ireland by England, Greece by Turkey; these three nations became his clients. When Belgium was threatened by Holland; when, in Switzerland, the strong cantons oppressed the weak; when enmity arose between Egypt and the Porte,—he took always, and on every occasion, the weaker side. Penetrated by the conviction that just causes are everlasting, and that every protest against injustice ends by moving Heaven and convincing men, he sought out, so to speak, every oppressed cause when at its last breath, to take its burden upon himself, and to become its champion. There is a suffering race, a race lost in distant isles, the race of black

slaves, which has been oppressed for centuries. He took its cause in hand, and from the year 1837 laboured for its emancipation. There are in all manufacturing places a crowd of hollow-cheeked children, with pale faces and worn eyes, and the sight of them made a profound impression upon him; he took their cause also in hand. If you run over the mere index of his speeches, you will find all generous efforts contained in it."

The subjects of these speeches are, as M. Cochin says, most significant. There is not one which is personal or in the interest of a party; every one bears the character of a plea for something or somebody. He was the public prosecutor of oppression, the public advocate of the weak; and it would be impossible to imagine a nobler office.

Now and then, however, in this quiet interval, he appears before us with all his youthful enthusiasm undiminished, the same "passionate pilgrim" who had sought out all over Germany, and kissed with trembling lips, the faint half-effaced footprints of his dear St Elizabeth. The following little scene occurred in 1841, when he made a pilgrimage with Rio into the poetic wilds of faithful Brittany—that corner of

France which is the home of all romance and legend, dear alike to the religious traveller and to the poet. M. Rio's object was to collect materials for a history of 'La Petite Chouannerie,' a children's crusade for the monarchy and the faith, in which he himself had taken part in the year 1815. Montalembert accompanied him, perhaps with some prevision of the part which Brittany should hereafter take in his great work on the Monks of the West, and with the idea of possibly finding a home for himself in its poetic seclusion. He was at the moment in search of a house where he could finally establish himself and his family; and Brittany, though far from all family associations, was the part of France most sacred to all who felt as he did. "It was a kind of Holy Land to his eyes," says M. Rio. As the two friends made their way through this storied but sad country, they stopped to change horses at Muzillac, a small town between Nantes and Vannes. "On hearing the name," says M. Rio, "M. de Montalembert asked me if this was not the place where our captain and our bard had been killed—the one while charging the enemy, the other while chanting one of his favourite songs? We then put off our departure, and went to the cemetery, where I easily

recognised the green mound, distinguished by its form from the other graves. More than twenty years had elapsed since my last visit to that melancholy spot. I was much moved, but my companion still more so. We knelt down, and after we had prayed and wept together, he said to me, with a tone of emotion which no words can express, 'This is the only thing which was wanting to our friendship.' "

Thus the graves of the young Royalists, whose opinions he did not share, went to the very heart of the man who could never refuse a sympathetic throb of fellow-feeling to any act of self-devotion. Though he had again and again expressed the strongest disapproval of those who linked the everlasting faith to any political principles, yet over the grassy mound in the Breton churchyard, he forgot everything but the most generous sympathy for those who had sealed their devotion with their blood. The following letter affords another private glimpse into his occupations, both literary and political. It is addressed to Ambrose de Lisle Philipps, Esq. of Grace Dieu Manor, a gentleman whose acquaintance he had made on his last visit to England. The first few words bear reference to the death of an infant only a few hours old :—

"VILLERSEXEL, *Feb.* 1, 1840.

"I pray to God that you may never feel this bereavement, which, however inferior at that age to what it might be later, and however sweetened to a Catholic soul by the image of the eternal and unmixed happiness to which this 'beata parvula,' as the Church sings, has attained, still leaves in the paternal heart a sort of desolation and solitude which time alone can assuage.

"My wish to get on with S. Bernard has induced me to spend the greatest part of the winter here, and give up the early debates of the House of Peers, where our small Catholic party has gained a new addition in Baron Charles Dupin, as you will have seen by the 'Univers.' During the autumn I have made several interesting tours through Champagne, Burgundy, and Franche Comté, looking out for an estate which I have not yet found, and also following the traces of S. Bernard in these provinces, which were the central points of his activity, and covered by his glorious foundations. Although nothing in France is to be compared to Fountains or Rivaulx, so dearly associated in my mind with your remembrance, yet I have discovered several beautiful ruins of Cistercian abbeys—but instead of being carefully kept up

and visited by a reverential posterity, they are daily falling under the pick-axe of that atheistical democracy which pervades and dishonours our unfortunate country.

"But my chief occupation and interest since I left England has been, although absent from Paris, the direction and maintenance of the 'Univers.' I do not choose to figure as the leading proprietor of this paper, although I am so in fact, in order not to give it a personal character, which would weaken its importance; but my mind is in a constant agitation about this great work. In looking back over the last six months, we have, indeed, great reason to thank God for the immense and unexpected results we have already obtained in the midst of the most grievous difficulties, trials, and heart-burnings. . . . It is now an established fact and a new feature introduced into the politics of the day, that there exists in France a 'parti Catholique,' having given up every subserviency to the absurd old *régime* and the legitimist idolatry of worldly power, but determined to defend and acquire by fair and liberal means the treasure of Catholic freedom. The 'Univers,' formerly only read in some few parsonages and vestries, is now quoted in every public paper in France and in many others on the Continent. The old Chan-

cellor, Baron Pasquier, said the other day to a friend of mine, 'Voilà un journal qui a un immense avenir.' The subscribers are rapidly increasing; in the month of January alone there has been a net increase of 130." *

In the year 1841 Montalembert bought the property and chateau of which he made, in the fullest sense of the word, and in all the warmth of its English signification, his "home." He found this, not in cold and distant Brittany, but in the richer department of the Côte d'Or. The situation, however, of his new house was in the high-lying country, above the warm region of vineyards, in the midst of a wild and simple landscape of undulating hills and moorland, not unlike Scotch Lowland scenery. La Roche en Breny (or Brenil) is a large village utterly separate from all interests except the agricultural; and its chateau, a fine and stately building of the time of Louis XIII., was exactly the kind of dwelling to receive such a man as its new owner. How he loved this chosen spot — how he set himself to decorate and enhance all its beauties—and how the very face of the country changed under his unwearied

* This and all other letters addressed to the same gentleman are written in English.

and skilful hand, shall be recorded further on. He was not allowed much time at this moment to enjoy it; for in 1842 Madame de Montalembert's health gave way, and she was ordered to spend the next winter in Madeira. There accordingly he went in the autumn with his suffering wife, his eldest child, and the now well-known Monsignor de Merode, the youngest brother of Madame de Montalembert, at that time a very young officer in the Belgian service. They had a painful and stormy voyage, and arrived, as invalids so often do, in the midst of one of those exceptional moments of evil weather from which even the most favoured spot on earth is not quite exempt. But, fortunately, Montalembert was not long doomed to the heart-sickening anxiety suffered by those who have to convey the dearest objects of their affection to the ends of the earth in search of summer and health. The invalid grew visibly stronger in that flowery island; and the little party—all young, all hopeful and joyous—made continual excursions here and there, entering fully into the novel existence about them, and enjoying the pleasant hardships, the odd accidents, which are common to travellers in lands untravelled. Beautiful as the island was, however, it was but an unsatisfactory residence for

an active mind, and Montalembert's energetic soul turned eagerly from his seclusion to the events which were going on at a distance. Another letter to Mr de Lisle Philipps shows his interest in a subject which is still most interesting to England, the position of the party then known as *Puseyites*.

"MADEIRA, *Dec.* 7, 1842.

"When I turn my languid thoughts from this scene of decline and atony, there is no spot, I can sincerely say, on which I am more fain to rest them than in England, and on her glorious advances to Catholic unity. Thanks to the 'Tablet' and the 'Catholic,' I can follow with an anxious eye and heart every step your Puseyite friends are taking, and I do so with the most heartfelt sympathy. I *fear* that too much is said about them, and too hasty conclusions drawn out of their writings and actions, in the Catholic press both of England and France. Whenever I read anything on this subject in our foolish papers, I always wish I could gag the editors and throw away all their ink; because, however useful and pleasant it may be to comfort us by informing us of what is going on, it is a thousand times more important not to put the slightest impediment in the way which

these Puseyites are so marvellously treading. I have been reading Faber's book, 'Sights and Thoughts in Foreign Churches,' and have been nearly confounded at all I found in that book. Much, indeed, I should have liked to follow your suggestion, and to have called at Oxford, a place now to me nearly as interesting as Rome itself. . . . Last autumn, 1841, I made a most exquisite tour in Brittany. I was most delightfully surprised to find so much faith and Catholic beauty of all sorts in that noble province. If ever you can, go to St Anne d'Auray, near Vannes, on St Anne's day, July 26th, and you will see such a sight as will make your heart leap with joy and love. I was unfortunately not able to find an estate to purchase in Brittany, where my life would have been one of constant enjoyment and sympathy, and have at last been obliged to put up with one in Burgundy, called La Roche en Breny, half-way between Paris and Lyons; it is a *relai de poste*, and to be found in every map. It is on the borders of a wild and rather romantic tract called the Morvan, where I have also some property, and not far from Franche Comté, where my wife's estates are situated. But the place is far from being what I should have desired, particularly as to the inhabitants, who are of

the common French sort of democratic infidels. . . . I am glad to see that you quite come round to my view of the close and natural union between Catholicism and real Conservatism, which does not at all mean Tory corruption, nor the low, servile monarchism of Continental Catholics."

The two public communications dated from this distant seclusion which came into the world to warn everybody concerned that Montalembert, with open eyes and alert intelligence, had but *reculer pour mieux sauter*, were of the most energetic character, and proved that this brief pause was destined to strengthen him for new efforts. One of these was a pamphlet entitled 'Devoir des Catholiques dans la question d'Enseignement,' and was his contribution in his absence to the agitation which he had laboured so long to excite, and which at last had begun to take shape and form, and to move the Catholic world in France. The other, a production of a very different kind, was addressed to England, not to France, and raises in our own mind, as we have no doubt it will in many of our readers, a half-comic realisation of the discomfiture of the persons to whom it was addressed, which renders us unable to discuss

gravely the amusing but arrogant and uncompromising intolerance with which, amid all his generosities and sympathies, this most real man regarded the ideal heretic. Because of the serio-comic yet furiously earnest character of this performance, and its revelation of a great paradox of nature, rather than because it has any real importance in Montalembert's history, we dwell upon it here for a moment in passing. It is printed in the collected edition of his works *in English*, with a note intimating that, "as it can only interest those who are thoroughly acquainted with the English language and manners, it has not been thought necessary to translate it." It is addressed to the Rev. J. Mason Neale, member of the Cambridge Camden Society. The reader will perceive by the private letter which we have just quoted, and by others which shall follow, that Montalembert was by no means destitute of sympathy for the High Church movement; but he had been evidently moved to impatience by that curious misapprehension of the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church which makes High Anglicans, even in the present day, expect a certain sympathy for their claims from Rome, without perceiving that their claims are far more offensive to Rome than the most decided Protestantism. The Camden

Society had elected Montalembert one of their honorary members, and it appears to have been on receipt of the news of this "unsolicited and unmerited" honour that the following trenchant response was made :—

"I protest against the most unwarrantable and unjustifiable assumption of the name Catholic by people and things belonging to the actual Church of England. It is easy to take up a name, but it is not so easy to get it recognised by the world and by competent authority. Any man, for example, may come out to Madeira, and may call himself a Montmorency or a Howard, and even enjoy the honour and consideration due to such a name, till the real Montmorencys and Howards hear about it and denounce him ; and then such a man would be justly scouted from society, and would fall down much lower than the lowliness from which he had attempted to rise. The attempt to steal away from us, and appropriate to the use of a fraction of the Church of England, the glorious title of Catholic, is proved to be an usurpation by every monument of the past and present, by the coronation oath of your sovereigns, by all the laws that have *established* your Church, even by the answer of your own

University of Oxford to the lay address against Dr Pusey, &c., where the Church of England is justly called the Protestant Reformed Church. The name itself is spurned at with indignation by the greater half at least of those who belong to the Church of England, just as the Church of England itself is rejected with scorn and detestation by the greater half of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom. The judgment of the whole indifferent world, the common-sense of humanity, agrees with the judgment of the Church of Rome, and with the sense of her 150 millions of children, to dispossess you of this name. The Church of England, who has denied her mother, is rightly without a sister. She has chosen to break the bonds of unity and obedience. Let her therefore stand alone before the judgment-seat of God and man. Even the debased Russian Church—that Church where lay despotism has closed the Church's mouth and turned her into a slave—disdains to recognise the Anglicans as Catholics. Even the Eastern heretics, although so sweetly courted by Puseyite missionaries, sneer at this new and fictitious Catholicism. . . . Consistent Protestants and rationalists are more Catholic in the *etymological* sense of the word than the Anglicans; for they at least can look upon

themselves as belonging to the same communion as those who, in every country, deny the existence of Church authority or of revealed religion —they have at least a negative bond to link them one with another. But that the so-called Anglo-Catholics, whose very name betrays their usurpation and their contradiction, whose doctrinal articles, whose liturgy, whose whole history, are such as to disconnect them from all mankind, except those who are born English and speak English — that they should pretend, on the strength of their private judgment alone, to be what the rest of mankind deny them to be, will assuredly be ranked among the first follies of the nineteenth century. That such an attempt, however, should succeed, is, thank God, not to be expected, unless it should please the Almighty to reverse all the laws which have hitherto directed the course of human affairs. You may turn aside for three hundred years to come, as you have done for three hundred years past, from the fountain of living waters; but to dig out a small channel of your own, for your own private insular use, wherein the living truth will run apart from its own docile and ever-obedient children—*that* will no more be granted to you than it has been to the Arians, the Nestorians, the Donatists, or any other triumph-

ant heresy. I protest, therefore, against the usurpation of a sacred name by the Camden Society as iniquitous; and I next protest against the object of this society, and all such efforts in the Anglican Church, as absurd."

One wonders what effect this flaming lava-stream of fierce and fiery condemnation had upon the respectable Dons, the dignified clergymen, the apostles of new-born Anglicanism, thirty years ago. But it is impossible, we believe, for any but members of that party, feeling themselves aggrieved, to read it now with anything but a smile. Flame and fire, and the San Benito, and the tortures of the Inquisition, breathe through it; and when we remember that its writer was the sworn champion of toleration and religious liberty, the paradox becomes all the more attractive. At the very same moment he wrote as follows of the national religiousness of that England which he had just beaten down under the furious rain of his indignation. He had been previously speaking of the want in his own country of that common national sense of religion which is so great a safeguard to a people.

"To measure the prodigious difference which

exists in this respect between Protestant England and France, you have only to compare the impression produced upon these two peoples by two contemporary events. When the Governor-General of India, a few months ago, appeared to entertain the intention of doing honour to the idolatry of sixty millions of the Hindoo subjects of Queen Victoria by the restoration of the gates of the temple of Somnauth, all England replied with a cry of indignation and wrath. But when, a few years ago, one of the sons of King Louis Philippe laid the first stone of a mosque on the soil where his ancestor St Louis died, France was as little moved by it as by the news of an ineffectual skirmish, or a review which had turned out a failure.

"Is another proof necessary of the different results produced by the two systems? Here it is. Men are surprised sometimes by the ease with which the immense city of London, with its two millions of inhabitants, is kept in order by a garrison of three small battalions and two squadrons; while to control the capital of France, which is half the size, two armies—one composed of forty thousand troops of the line, the other of sixty thousand National Guards—are necessary. But the stranger who arrives in London on a Sunday morning—when he sees

everything suspended in that gigantic capital in obedience to God — when, in that centre of colossal business, of innumerable interests, and of the greatest trade in the universe—in that port where the produce of the five divisions of the globe is disembarked daily, he finds vast silence and complete repose, scarcely interrupted by the bells which call to prayer and by the immense crowds on their way to church—then his astonishment ceases. He understands that there is another curb for a Christian people besides that made by bayonets, and that when the law of God is fulfilled with such a solemn submissiveness, God Himself—if I dare use the words—charges Himself with the police arrangements."

There could not be a better instance than these two of the mixture of tolerance and intolerance in this remarkable man. The silence of London on the Sunday morning goes to his very heart. He is *attendri*, touched with profound and real feeling, and that sense of brotherhood which is truly Christian and beyond all distinctions. But the pretensions of the Anglo-Catholic send him in a moment to the very extremity of the spiritual scale, and no words are to be found hot enough, strong enough, sufficiently penetrating and cutting, to express at once his reprobation and his contempt.

The following letter, addressed to Mr Philipps, shows, however, how little it was Montalembert's intention to offend the English Puseyites, notwithstanding the force of his expressions.

"FALMOUTH, *July* 18, 1843.

" . . . At all events, we shall be able, I hope, to go together to Oxford; and how happy I shall then feel to be initiated by you to the new light of that most curious and important of all European cities at the present time. . . . I am a subscriber to the 'British Critic,' as well as to the 'Dublin' and 'Catholic' Magazines. I constantly read the 'Times' and 'Morning Post;' besides which, the Anglican minister of Madeira, Mr Lowe, is an ardent and well-informed Puseyite, and during last spring I was in frequent and interesting communication with the Rev. Mason Neale, one of the founders of the Camden Society at Cambridge. You see, therefore, that, under your excellent guidance, I have been making rather a deepened study of Puseyism, and I think I may safely say I have never studied anything with more interest and more conscientious attention. But although I quite agree with you in the intense sympathy you feel for this Anglican revival, although I do not hesitate to look upon this crisis in the ecclesiastical affairs of England, and its con-

sequences, as the most important event of our epoch, yet I cannot feel so sanguine as you do in your hopes of the ultimate return of the *Church* of England to the eternal truth through Puseyism. I do not really know whether, on the contrary, Puseyism, *quant au tout ensemble*, will not give the Anglican schism a new life and new energy;—that many individual conversions of the highest caste will take place in consequence of such views and studies as those professed by the 'British Critic,' &c., I look upon as quite certain;—but I greatly fear, on the other hand, that when the Episcopate will have been invaded by the new spirit of Oxford, and when this new spirit *se trouvera seul maître du terrain*, the successors of Pusey, Newman, &c. will not resist the temptation of standing alone and looking up to themselves as reformers instead of beating their breasts as repentant sinners. On this ground, I confess I feel more inclined to the opinion of the 'Tablet' than to yours. I do not see as yet any stringent proof of that humility which must ever be the first standard of a positive return to truth. . . . How gloriously do the achievements of O'Connell and the Irish hierarchy shine out from amidst the dull and servile fog in which the rest of the world seems immersed! How desirable it would

be that the Catholics of England, and indeed of the whole world, should divest themselves of their lukewarm prudence and timidity, and follow this noble example of energy and strength! What a contrast with the sad downfall of Catholic ideas and Catholic institutions in Spain and Portugal, which I have lately visited on my way from Madeira to France! In these unfortunate countries, which were once the bulwarks of our holy Church, the spirit of faith and legitimate resistance to oppression has been completely broken down by three centuries of political despotism, and diplomatic subserviency on the part of the Church. Even in France, on that most vital question of the freedom of education, except the ill-directed but meritorious efforts of the 'Univers,' the great majority of Catholics show neither zeal nor intelligence."

We may conclude this subject by another extract from a letter of considerably later date, in which the writer expressed his *naïve* surprise at the effect produced upon the mind of Mr Ambrose de Lisle by the Camden Society letter. If any wounded spirit yet feels the sting of that fiery document, the ingenuous astonishment herein expressed may contain a certain balm :—

"La Roche, *August* 26, 1846.

"I now hasten to tell you that I was far from supposing that your prolonged silence arose from the feelings of grief and vexation which you now inform me of as having been produced in your heart by my letter to Mr Neale. Not only do I most heartily forgive you for your supposed trespass against me, but I crave your forgiveness for myself, and for the pain I gave you by this letter, although most unwillingly. I must, however, confess that I am quite at a loss to understand how my letter to the Camden Society could give any sort of check to the course you have been so usefully and so nobly pursuing for many years. Many people have told me quite the contrary; and if I remember right, one of the recent converts quoted in his public letter to the 'Times' a passage from my said epistle to the Camdenian, in order to justify and explain his going over to Rome. Surely my letter contains nothing more severe against the Puseyites than the eloquent picture of the so-called Anglican Church, drawn by Mr Newman himself, in the 'Dublin Review' for last June. I confess I cannot refrain from making a most essential difference among the Puseyites and Anglo-Catholics—between those who are humble, simple, and feel the weakness

of their position, and those proud, ignorant, and obstinate fools who think themselves the true representatives of Catholicism in the world, like the people who write in the 'English Churchman,' who pretend, like Neale himself, and so many others, to understand every beauty, and practise every virtue of Catholicity while maintaining their schismatical disobedience against Rome and their outrageous contempt of the Romanists in England. These men, I am convinced, will always prove the worst enemies of the Church, more so than infidels themselves."

The article upon "Le Devoir des Catholiques," gave offence at Court, where constitutional agitation was feared, as it has always been the instinct of kings to fear it; and when Montalembert returned for a few months to France, his reception was not gracious. "When do you think of returning to Madeira?" was the kindest thing King Louis Philippe said. The return to Madeira, however, was a very short one, made only to escort his wife back again in recovered health to their home; and henceforward public life swallowed him up, and the next seven years were spent in making history, and in adding many a brilliant page to the records of public eloquence and national progress in his beloved France.

CHAPTER XII.

PUBLIC WORK—THE QUESTION OF EDUCATION.

We have already had occasion to indicate the state of the law in France in respect to education : but it may be well to set it more clearly before the reader before proceeding to record the progress of the brilliant Parliamentary campaign which finally changed it. National education in France had been placed in the beginning of the century by Napoleon in the hands of the University. This selection of an authorised source of State education, which should always be within the control of Government, was entirely in accordance with French ideas; or rather, it was one of those triumphant pieces of arbitrary legislation which have given shape and colour to modern French ideas, and moulded the nation into the form under which we know it best. It was such a settlement of the question as only an absolute ruler could have made ; but

it had so many recommendations and conveniences that it is not to be wondered at if a much-vexed constitutional Government, careful and troubled about many things, and glad to escape the additional burden of such a vast addition to its labours as must have been involved in a new settlement of the system of education, clung desperately to the old rule. At the first glance it seems reasonable and fitting enough that all such questions should be remitted into the hands of a body of men specially trained to their consideration, and with whom it rested to grant all the privileges of literary rank. Were we to suppose, however, Oxford or Cambridge endowed with this immense power, and possessing the sole authority in all educational matters, we should more easily realise the state of affairs under the French system. In such a case our parish schools, intended for elementary education only, might be so far free that any Englishman possessed of certain qualifications would be authorised to conduct them; but for every other kind of school in England, private and public, it would be necessary that two or three of the masters should be graduates of the chosen university, and that they should submit their system of education and the books they used to the supervision of the

academical body from which they drew their diplomas.

The comparison, however, would be more fair if we substituted the London University for the older institution; for the University of France had at the time of which we treat no religious foundation, and banished that part of education from its courses altogether. At the time of its institution by Napoleon it had been placed at least nominally on a religious foundation, one of the articles of its charter providing that "all the schools of the Imperial University should take for the basis of their teaching—1st, the principles of the Catholic religion." Under the Restoration this rule had been attempted to be carried out, and a bishop had been placed at the head of the educational system; but this, according to Montalembert himself, who asked for no religious monopoly while he attacked the secular, had succeeded only in making both the Government who enacted it and the religion in whose name it was carried out, unpopular in the country. After the Revolution of 1830, France ceased to have any State religion, and the religious basis of education was necessarily abolished. The University then became in name, as it had long been in fact, an entirely secular institution, scarcely even indifferent, more usually taking a

hostile attitude in respect to religion. And it is the nearest parallel we can find to say that were the entire education of England to be placed in the hands of the London University, every higher school interdicted which had not the licence of that body, and no man allowed to open any classes for instruction unless he were one of its graduates, the state of affairs in France would be to a certain extent reproduced. We are aware that the comparison is still defective, for there were no institutions such as those of Oxford and Cambridge to modify the sway of the French University; while, on the other hand, the London University would not venture among ourselves to treat religion with the same careless scorn which the French corporation was capable of. But it is, we repeat, the nearest parallel we can make. The amended charter of 1830 had admitted the necessity of a remedy for this state of affairs, and had pledged the Government, "with the least delay possible," to provide for "public instruction and freedom of teaching." This article of the charter, as the reader has seen, was the cause of Montalembert's first public appearance, and the foundation of his constitutional opposition to a system which was hateful to all good Christians — Catholic and Protestant alike—and which might well have

been obnoxious to the intelligent public, even though without religious convictions at all.

But that little Quixotic enterprise had ended where it began; no serious agitation arose, nor were there any successors to take up the opposition which Lacordaire and Montalembert had commenced so brilliantly. And years went on, and nothing more was done. Religious agitation, in short, fell out of fashion. The fulminations of Rome, and the counsels of the religious press, discouraged Liberalism among the clergy; and even those who retained its principles kept silence until the storm brought upon them by Lamennais's rashness should have blown over. The small number of laymen who at all times are more devoted to the Church than to the State, those who were *Catholiques avant tout*, were hushed by the same influence. "Le bruit ne fait jamais de bien et le bien ne fait jamais de bruit." This aphorism already quoted, at once so true and so false, closed their mouths.

There was at the same time a political difficulty which added another complication to the question. The great mass of devout Catholics in France were at the same time devoted Legitimists, and to enlist them in the cause of Free Education was to identify the cause

with that of the fallen Bourbons, to afford to the Legitimist party a new and powerful means of propagating their principles, and to give large scope to the enemies of the movement, for abuse and misrepresentation of the true champions of religious liberty. This latter result, indeed, was one which was inevitable; and, notwithstanding the perpetual protests of M. de Montalembert, and his repeated and most distinct statements of his own political faith, this fiction was thrown in his teeth continually at each new step of the agitation. He was accused of a desire to bring back the principles of the *ancien régime*—of an intention of overthrowing the dynasty, and various other crimes which were politically hateful and impossible to him—as well as of that wish to restore inquisitions and burn heretics, which is the favourite and never-failing retort of the secular party upon every man who claims freedom for his Church. Even Lacordaire, a republican and democrat, had, by assuming the character and garb of a Dominican friar, laid himself open to this ludicrously inappropriate accusation; and Montalembert, a nobleman of ancient family, could scarcely hope that his consistent expression of principles and the unvarying tenor of his life would be enough to free him from so handy

and convenient a reproach as that of belonging secretly to the Legitimist party.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, the little party of which he was the head continued to struggle on, working, for a long time against hope, with a valour which, seeing all the complications of their position, deserves the highest praise — opposing their steady, loyal, and honourable purpose not only to the misrepresentations with which they were assailed by their enemies, but to the real danger of encouraging a political agitation among their friends which was contrary to all their principles. Montalembert had to defend himself even from his retirement in Madeira from an accusation brought against him by the 'Débats,' then the organ of Government, which stigmatised his pamphlet on the "Devoir des Catholiques dans la question de la liberté d'enseignement" as "a declaration of war addressed to the Revolution of July in the name of the ecclesiastical party," and coinciding curiously with the visit of a Legitimist deputation to the Duc de Bordeaux. Never was a reproach more entirely without foundation. It is true that, with the generous weakness peculiar to his nature, Montalembert became an Orleanist only after the house of Orleans had

fallen; but even the fall of the elder branch never made him its partisan, a triumph of principle over this most noble and touching characteristic which those who knew him best can best appreciate.

With all these exasperating circumstances against him, it is wonderful to note the thorough moderation of his pretensions and his toleration of all the rights of his adversaries, excluding only the monopoly, which was no right, but a vexatious and oppressive privilege. To show this, we will quote from a very early speech, delivered in the House of Peers in 1842, when the question had scarcely been reopened, when he had few or no supporters, and little backing even from the religious party. In later days —in the heat of the agitation which rose and warmed with every new debate—his appeals might be more hot, his protests more impatient, but he never departed by a hair's-breadth from his broad tolerance of other people's views, and the modest justice of the following claims for those which he held as his own :—

"It is certain that the teaching of the University is mistrusted by a large portion of French citizens, and particularly by those who are solicitous about the interests of religion. For my

own part, this does not surprise me; and I should not even count it as a crime to the University, although I fully partake all that mistrust and fear. I should not consider the University, I repeat, in fault, were it not that the University exercises a monopoly. In short, gentlemen, notwithstanding the contrary affirmation of the Minister of Public Instruction—notwithstanding his good intentions, and those of all the ministers who have in their turn guided public instruction in this country (I except none, for I am firmly persuaded that all were animated by the desire that this universitarian teaching should be above reproach)—notwithstanding all this, such a task, as I have already said from this tribune, is above the powers of these eminent men, and must always continue to be so. In a social organisation like ours it is difficult for the University to represent anything but indifference in religious matters. This indifference, I repeat, I do not blame; it is the result of our social condition. A State which has no official religion—which acknowledges all religions professed by Frenchmen, and consequently that professed by the majority of French citizens—cannot have any intention of attacking their faith; but I do not believe that it has any mission—any authority—to preach it. Now, education is, as nobody

denies, nothing but a continual preaching to children and young people. There are a great number of men in France who profess indifference in respect to religion; the education given by the University may be perfectly good and sufficient for them, but it is not enough for others. And here I hope I shall have power to demonstrate the truth in respect to two assertions which have occupied a large place in the arguments against liberty of teaching.

"Absolute liberty of teaching, without regulation or control, has never been asked for, either in this Chamber or elsewhere. The idea of excluding Government from a right of supervision, or even from the right of interfering up to a certain point in a matter so important to public prosperity and the security of social order, has never occurred to any of us. And never have the clergy, according to another favourite fiction, either asked for the abolition of the University or their substitution in its place. It is extremely convenient, gentlemen, to create men of straw in guise of enemies and to overthrow them at one's ease; but behind these spectres, even after they are cut down, justice and truth remain always erect and untouched; and it is their cause which I come to plead before you. . . .

"I do not hesitate to say that in the great establishments provided by the State there is, if not an open hostility, at least a complete absence of all teaching which is doctrinally religious; and, I repeat once more, no other state of affairs is possible in establishments intended to receive the children of many parents who would be displeased and distrustful did they find religion constantly in the foreground. But beside this class of parents, do not forget, gentlemen, that there are, if not the majority of Frenchmen, at least a very great number, who wish religion to hold the first place in education. And do not imagine that it is only exaggerated Catholics, Ultramontanes—the clerical party, as they are called—who desire the supreme and perpetual intervention of religion in the education of youth."

It was in 1844 that the serious campaign commenced. And before we quote the eloquent and brilliant speech in which, as leader of the new agitation, Montalembert threw down his glove to his adversaries and bade them defiance in the name of his creed and race, we may give the reader the advantage of seeing what were the ideas of the Government of July in respect to education, as contained in a *Rapport sur le*

projet de loi, embodying some insignificant modifications of the existing legislation, which was presented to the Chamber by M. Liadières so late as 1847, and which is given by Montalembert in an article published in the 'Correspondant' of the same date. The character of these extracts is too distinct to be modified by any context, and accordingly we do not hesitate to reproduce them as we find them. The principle enunciated by M. Liadières is that "childhood is a depot which society has placed under the protection of the State;" and he proceeds to inform us what is the theory of the State in respect to this trust:—

"Under a constitutional government emulation reigns, and the desire of rising in the world is in all hearts. The son of the ploughman aims at the bar; the son of the shopkeeper at the magistracy. . . . How can fathers guide their children in paths of which they are themselves ignorant, and advise them for their interest in matters which they do not even understand? That which they cannot do the State must do for them. . . . It must enlighten them, show them the true way, and save them from the snares laid for the credulous. The father has a right to ask freedom of teaching, satisfaction

for all his necessities, schools for all careers, masters for all professions; but let him go no farther; to ask more would be to betray his own cause.

"There is, however, one legitimate privilege which the law ought to respect: its authority stops on the threshold of the paternal home. The only safeguard there is that of the father's will; the only constraint that which he imposes. He may educate his child how he will and by whom he will; but the moment that this limit is crossed, when the child becomes one of many children in a private or public school, the right of the father loses part of its force, which that of the State at once takes up.

"The legislator stops short upon the threshold of the domestic home. He neither asks the name, the condition, nor the amount of knowledge possessed by the private tutor. . . . What is it, then, that, in the name of the father, is asked of him? . . . That every head of a school, whoever he may be, may have the right of preparing pupils for the examination of the *baccalauréat?* Here the State interposes and refuses. It refuses because this is a question which belongs to it alone; it refuses because the privileges of fathers do not go so far as to impose upon the State a certain system of teaching; it refuses, in

short, *because it knows better what is good for these fathers than they do themselves.*

"The State should watch over the sanctity of youth, and carefully clear away from its path even the smallest evil from which inexperience leaves it defenceless. This is the right of the State, and its rigorous duty; and whatever be the choice of fathers, the State ought to be able to say to them on the threshold of the establishment which they have selected for their sons—"Enter, I have taken all precautions; my anxiety has gone beyond yours. Fear nothing, neither for the health nor the morals of your children."

Did ever paternal government, Papal or secular, speak more plainly? The State thus announces itself as providing for the education of the child because it knows better what is wanted than the father does; a theory which, though perfectly consistent with the despotism which first promulgated it, seems an incredible pretension on the part of a constitutional Government. Without going into this question, however, we may pause to explain to such as are not familiar with French educational terms, the still further and harder bondage referred to above. The examination for the degree of *baccalauréat* is the key to all public occupations in France. The

bar, the magistracy, even, we believe, the army, and all the infinite multiplicity of State offices, require this qualification; and without it the career of a gentleman is closed to the young Frenchman. But in the years between 1830 and 1848 no young Frenchman could present himself for this examination who had not been educated in one of the public *lycées*, or at a school licensed by the University, conducted by graduates of the University, and submitting all its studies and school-books to the revision of that body, or its local representatives. Thus it will be seen that the bondage of the youth of France and their parents to this educational system was a tremendous servitude. The rich man, it was true, might educate his son with a private tutor under his own eye, but by doing so he shut out his son from all the possibilities of a public career. The only exception to the rule was made in favour of the ecclesiastical seminaries which existed in each diocese under the control of the bishop. The number of the pupils at these seminaries was limited; they were a semi-clerical class, and were arbitrarily shut up, if we may use the expression, to a class education, that most fatal of all mistakes in training; and only a certain proportion of them were allowed to compete at the *baccalauréat*

examinations. Thus even the disagreeable alternative of sending a boy intended for secular life to one of these establishments under false pretences, ran the risk of defeating itself, and balking the unfortunate parent who attempted in that way to secure a religious education for his son. He was shut in on every side. To the poor man it was absolutely impossible to resist; and the rich man could do so, whether by sending his boy abroad, or by educating him in his own house—only by sacrificing his boy's interests. Never was there a more complete or skilfully riveted bondage. Even our simile of the absolute rule of the London University fails entirely here; for with us a university degree is absolutely demanded from very few, and a man who does not possess it may, if otherwise qualified, aspire to any place or position. But the French lad, to whom no career was open without the Open Sesame of this qualification, and who could possess this qualification only by the help of the schools regulated by the University, was placed at a hopeless disadvantage. It seems equally incredible that such restrictions should have been borne by any people, and that a government founded upon liberal principles and erected by revolution should have dared to maintain them; but so it was.

As for the education thus conveyed, we have already indicated the horror with which it is still regarded by all religious men. It was secular education in the fullest meaning of that word. An hour or two of religious instruction given occasionally by the *aumônier* of each college to the Catholic pupils counted for little against the general influence of the place, which was entirely alien to religion. Nor were matters improved when the *aumônier* was replaced by the Protestant pastor, or any other rarely seen and little esteemed teacher of the "*cours de Christianisme,*" as these religious lessons are entitled by a Protestant champion of free education, M. de Gasparin, whom Montalembert quotes largely. The general tendency of such an education was, it is apparent, to create infidels, not Christians. "There is one result of the education given under the auspices of the University," says Montalembert, in a hot discussion upon the subject, "which governs every other, and which is clear as daylight. It is that children who leave their family with the seed of faith in them, to enter the University, come out of it infidels." And when this statement was received with contradictions and *mouvement*, he went on to repeat it as follows, supporting his assertion by the kindred statements of M. de Gasparin:—

"I appeal to the testimony of all fathers and mothers. Let us take any ten children out of the schools regulated by the University, at the end of their studies, and find one Christian among them if you can! One in ten! and that would be a prodigy. . . . Now, I ask, can there be a more strange or more alarming fact? And here I address myself not to such or such a religious belief, but to all. In respect to religion, either in itself or from a political point of view, I know only two parties,—those who have a faith, and who practise it, whatever it may be; and those who have none—those for whom religion is simply conventional—a human invention, which does not bind them, but which they think they have the right to bind. These are the two parties in all religious matters. Catholics, Protestants, Jews, all who believe humbly and sincerely in the religion which they profess, it is to them I appeal, whom I recognise as my brethren. And all those who have a sincere belief, and practise it, will confirm what I have said of the religious results of the education of the University. Let us hear the testimony of the young and eloquent defender of French Protestantism, the son of our colleague, M. Agenor de Gasparin. . . . 'Religious education,' he says, 'has no existence in the colleges.

The ineffaceable stain, the permanent condemnation of mixed establishments is, that it is necessary to remit religion to its hour of teaching, as one and most frequently the last of lessons. This education was my own. I received it under the best conditions. . . . Now, I bethink myself with terror what I was when I issued forth from this national education. I recollect what all my companions were. Were we very good citizens? I know not, but certainly we were not Christians; we did not possess even the weakest beginnings of evangelical faith.'"

This double testimony could easily be backed by many another; and nothing can be more interesting to ourselves at the present crisis of our national experience in point of education than this great experiment which has been worked out so near us — under our very eyes. The secular system has here had a long and full trial, and ought to have fully exhibited what it can do in the way of training men and influencing national character. What is the result which it has left plainly before us? The men it has brought up are the men who allowed France to be bound for eighteen years in the humiliating bondage of the Second Empire; who have furnished excuses to all the world for call-

ing her the most socially depraved of nations; who have filled her light literature with abominations, and her graver works with blasphemy; and who, finally, have procured that great humiliation and downfall for her, of which we have lately been spectators, and from which, with all its infinite varieties of misery and shame, the lovers of France hope rather for resurrection than recovery. Amid all the causes that have been alleged for the melancholy history of the past years, this, perhaps, is the only one that has not been insisted upon; and yet, when we read the uncontradicted statements of M. de Montalembert and others as to the immediate result of this godless education, it is difficult to suppose that a training which told so badly on individual character should have left the national character unimpaired, especially as we have so lately and so loudly been called upon to remark its defects. France has never before in her history acquitted herself so badly. And whose fault is it? everybody has asked. But nobody, so far as we are aware, has blamed the *doctrinaires* and intellectual bigots, who did their best to banish all sense of religious duty, all Christian faith, all reverence and worship, from the young generations whom they trained. Few people, so far as we are aware,

except those who were absolutely engaged in it, even remember the long and persevering struggle with which Montalembert and his friends won for Frenchmen the privilege of bringing up their children as Christians, if they would. Whether that permission was won too late to have much effect for at least another generation, is a question which we need not attempt to answer here; but it is deeply interesting to ourselves, in the present divided state of opinion upon educational subjects; and it might be well worth the while of a competent inquirer to investigate this great experiment, and to trace how far the national decadence, also so painfully visible, may be attributed to it.

This was the tremendous system of spiritual and intellectual oppression against which Montalembert put his boyish lance in rest at twenty, and which he took up in 1844 as the serious work of his life. Few bigger giants have called forth any champion's powers. Fortunately, and very much by his own persevering labours, he found a totally new spirit aroused in France on his return from Madeira. The French bishops had finally been stirred up to remonstrance and protest, and various members of both Chambers were to be found who ventured to claim roundly for religious parents the same

rights and privileges which were possessed by those to whom religion was nothing. Montalembert had nearly reached that "mezzo del cammin di nostra vita" which is the best period for great efforts, and he placed himself unhesitatingly at the head of the little army which had dedicated itself to this work. It was but a forlorn-hope at the best, but it had all the daring necessary to such a band; and it was in the following noble and eloquent words that its leader opened the first parallel of battle, and declared his determination to fight for his great object to the last gasp. This speech is at once a defiance, an explanation, and a manifesto. The party had been but a few straggling individuals up to this moment; but from henceforward it became a small, compact, but vigorous body, identified by a spirit-stirring and heroic name.

"Allow me to tell you, gentlemen, a generation has arisen among you of men whom you know not. Let them call us neo-Catholics, sacristans, Ultramontanes, as you will; the name is nothing; the thing exists. We take for our motto that with which the generous Poles in last century headed their manifesto of resistance to the Empress Catherine—'We, who love freedom more than all the world, and the Catholic

religion more than freedom.' We are neither conspirators nor courtiers; we are to be found neither in insurrections nor in antechambers; we are strangers to all your coalitions, to all your recriminations, to all your cabinet and party struggles. . . . Born and educated in the midst of freedom, of representative and constitutional institutions, our souls have been penetrated, and that for ever, by their influence. We are told, 'Freedom is not for you; it is against you. You have not made it.' It is true that freedom is not our work, but it belongs to us; and who dares to take it from us? To those who hold such language we reply—Have you made the sun? yet you enjoy it. Have you made France? yet you are proud to call her your country. *Eh bien!* Freedom is our sun, and no man has the right to extinguish its light; and the charter is the soil upon which we stand to attack you when it is needful; and no man has a right to snatch that soil from under our feet.

". . . In this France, which has been wont to produce only men of heart and spirit, are we alone, we Catholics, to consent to be fools and cowards? Are we to acknowledge ourselves such bastards, so degenerated from the condition of our fathers, that we must give up our

reason to rationalism, deliver our conscience to the University, our dignity and our freedom into the hands of law-makers whose hatred for the freedom of the Church is equalled only by their profound ignorance of her rights and her doctrines? What! because we are of those *who confess*, do they suppose that we rise from the feet of our priests ready to hold out our own wrists to the handcuffs of anti-constitutional legalism? What! because the sentiment of faith reigns in our hearts, do they suppose that honour and courage have perished there? Then let them undeceive themselves. You are told to be *implacable*. Be so; do all that you will and can against us. The Church will answer you by the mouth of Tertullian and the gentle Fénélon. 'You have nothing to fear from us; but we do not fear you.' And I add in the name of Catholic laymen like myself, Catholics of the nineteenth century—We will not be helots in the midst of a free people. We are the successors of the martyrs, and we do not tremble before the successors of Julian the Apostate. We are the sons of the Crusaders, and we will never draw back before the sons of Voltaire!"

It is little to be wondered at that *mouvements divers* followed, according to the newspaper re-

ports, this burst of indignant eloquence. The words made the very air of France tingle; they defined at once the two sides with one of those happy strokes which make the fortune of a party, and which are doubly dear to all who speak the language of epigram—the most brilliantly clear, incisive, and distinct of tongues. Henceforward the *fils des croisés* were a recognised power, and they held their ground stoutly against all comers with a pertinacity and constitutional strength of endurance which the continued vehemence of their leader's sallies, and all his daring candour and enthusiastic partisanship, threw into still further relief. They seized every kindred subject with a zeal that never flagged. They took advantage of every accident; they thrust their subject forward, seizing, whenever they could do it, upon some trifling debate, and bringing it round to their purpose with all the skill of tried Parliamentarians. They even pushed their tactics further still, with many lingering reminiscences of O'Connell, and issued address after address to Catholics, expounding to them their duty in respect to elections, and leaving no rest to the *clientèle* which they gradually gathered round them. Thus their work was twofold. Inside the House of Peers they were on the watch for every opportunity

of recalling the attention of Parliament to their subject, suffering no occasion to slip by them; while out of doors they had to create, and encourage, and extend the very spirit which they represented.

This was the hardest part of the work. If there is any truth in distinctions of race, it is true, we suppose—though not without tremendous exceptions to the rule — that the Celt is more disposed to support an evil, so long as he can make it bearable, than the Saxon; and it is certain that constitutional means of resistance were very little known in France, and that between passive and sullen endurance, and armed revolution, the mass of Frenchmen knew no middle course. That part of the French nation which cared most for religious education was the one least disposed to agitation. The actual *fils des croisés*, for the most part, submitted to the yoke with a certain loyalty to facts, without any sentiment of loyalty to Government. They waited the time when they could resort to the old fashion of changing that Government, but in the mean time were disposed to believe that to take any part in the political life of the country would be to compromise their own position. Indeed, there would almost seem to have been in their minds a curious satisfac-

tion with the wrongs they had to bear; a sense that the harder the yoke, and the worse the treatment to which they were subjected, the better was their case for the overthrow of the existing *régime*, and the substitution of another. This, unfortunately, is too much the temper of all opposition in France. To overcome it was the strenuous endeavour of Montalembert and the few supporters who held by him. He made an immense effort to organise constitutional resistance over all the country. The machinery of the old "Agency" which had been established by Lamennais, and the local acquaintance acquired by its directors, stood Montalembert in stead in this new undertaking; and, in short, while his first and professed object was to obtain free education, his secondary but still greater object was to give France that political education which should make her capable of remedying her own wrongs peacefully, and of keeping intelligent watch against dangerous legislation. In his first aim he succeeded by patient and persevering labour. In his second he did not succeed: but the attempt, though the ordinary spectator might pass it over without even perceiving the intensity of the effort or its high purpose, was almost a nobler and more patriotic work. To convince a legislature that certain laws which

it has made are inexpedient, and to procure the redress of certain special wrongs, is a kind of effort which, in the long-run, with perseverance, eloquence, earnestness, and a good case, must succeed. But to rouse a nation into an altogether new kind of public existence is a more difficult undertaking, and a still more patriotic conception. We have endeavoured to show to the reader with what eloquence and vehement ardour Montalembert claimed the rights which had been taken from France in respect to the education of her children. We will now show how he argued and entreated, how he stormed and taunted, how he pleaded with and implored his country to rouse herself from her apathy, and take this work into her own hands. It is common—or at least it has been common during the last twenty years—to say that the constitutional political life which exists among ourselves is unsuitable to Frenchmen; but there was one Frenchman, at least, who did not think so, and who, with all the ardour of his soul, with tears of earnestness in his eyes, with a voice trembling with sincerity and conviction, entreated France to disprove the calumny. He did not succeed; but the effort was worth a man's strength and life.

Here is a satirical sketch of the apathy into

which the Catholic party had permitted itself to fall. We may premise at once, that there may be no mistake in the matter, that it is to this Catholic party that all Montalembert's exhortations are addressed. It was this party, and not any section of the Left, or Right, or Centre, which he led, and with which he identified himself; and naturally it was this special portion of his countrymen whom he was most anxious to prick and stimulate into active life.

"The Catholics of our day have in France one predominating inclination, and one function which specially belongs to them. It is sleep. To sleep well and softly, and to sleep long, and after waking for a moment to sleep again as soon as possible—such has been, up to the present moment, their policy, their philosophy, and, according to some, their greatest gift. Certainly there are exceptions; but in general, the majority of French Catholics belong to the class of sleepers. We will not pause at present to inquire into the causes of these phenomena of natural history—we will confine ourselves to a statement of the fact, and of the position which results from it. Friends and enemies have exerted themselves in vain to awake this great body from its slumber—the one by warnings,

always too well-founded; the other by imprudent aggressions. In vain the overseers of souls, the bishops, almost without exception, have shaken the torch of truth before their heavy eyes, or sounded the trumpet of the divine Word in their slumbrous ears. In vain Time goes on, bringing in its train changes of irresistible force and incalculable importance in the position of men and things, aggravating every day the perjury of those who have sworn allegiance to the Charter without fulfilling it, and the meanness of those who continue to bear a yoke which heaven and earth would aid them to break. Everything has been useless up to the present moment. When an eloquent voice or a too significant fact has raised around the Catholic Frenchman enough of commotion to trouble his peace, he half opens his eyelids for a moment, and turns a dull and astonished gaze upon the unequal fight which is going on over his head. He takes hold, as it flies past him, of the name of Religion, but says to himself that the curé said nothing of this from the pulpit; of the name of Liberty, but he knows that this is fare to which he is unused; of the name of the Charter, and he recollects it declares the majority of Frenchmen to be composed of his fellow-believers, and that when one belongs to the majority one is strong. But thereupon he

turns on his side, and hides his head under the first coarse coverlet that offers, in order to escape the importunate light. He yawns and grows impatient of the noise which disturbs him, and finally falls asleep again, and stretches out his indolent limbs till they have attained just the position necessary to enable his magnetisers to add another coil the more to those bonds which are destined to hinder his arising, should he ever take a fancy to wake again."

Then he proceeds to show them the power of action which is possible to them if they would but shake off this fatal slumber; and points out the fact that Government is not even justified in offering freedom to them, but that it must be gained by their own exertions, by that "which the English in their political language call *pressure from without*." That Government may thus be forced to yield them their rights, he insists upon and repeats.

"But there are different ways of compelling this grant of rights. The happy constitution possessed by France offers to every serious and weighty form of public opinion the legal and certain means of constraining the Government. Wise Governments measure and calculate the

value of such an opinion; they yield to it by degrees, and thus acquire a new element of strength and duration. Foolish Governments resist, are stubborn, and fall. They fall, not always under the blows of the force which they have despised, but by a just and speedy sentence of that sovereign wisdom whose laws they have misunderstood. But every victory which is worth the trouble of being won, ought to be purchased by effort, by sacrifice, by struggle To believe that because you have made your plaint yesterday it will be redressed to-morrow, without difficulty, without care, and without effort, is the most foolish and dangerous of illusions. It must be added that it is also the commonest of illusions among the Catholics of France. We like to be dupes, and dupes of the vulgarest artifice. If we continue so now, it must be acknowledged that we are dupes by inclination and by nature, without pretext and without excuse."

After pleading and remonstrating thus for page after page of eloquent and vigorous writing, he turns once more with indignant satire to give a sketch of the sentiments of the average elector, and the way in which he defends himself from discharging his public duty.

"To all this the Catholic elector, the Catholic citizen, such as the political and religious education of our time has made him, has an answer, or rather a crowd of answers, ready in reply.

"'We are not in England' (he says), 'but in France; what is done on the other side of the Channel is no rule for us. I do not go to the elections because my name is not registered on the list of voters, and I have not registered myself, because that would have made me liable to be called upon as a juryman. Besides, what should I do among all those low people, who buy and sell their consciences? Precisely at the time of the elections I have to take my wife and children to the seaside. It is well known that I don't mix myself up with anything of the sort; I take no part in what is going on; I mind my own business, and I don't know what any one wants of me more. As for all these Catholic agitators, they bore me. That sort of thing can come to no good end. So long as M. Guizot is Minister I will never be his dupe; corruption will overflow all bounds, and the evil will cure itself by its own excess. What will come, may; *advienne que pourra.* And then, if, after all, this Government holds its

own, my children must have a career; and the Government is the master of that career. If Henri V. comes back all will be right; but in the mean time, if I oppose my *sous-préfet*, my son may fail in his examination for the degree of baccalaureate. As for me, I stay in my corner. I have enough to do to improve my land, to increase my fortune, to lay up something for my children. You speak perpetually of the duties of the father of a family; why, these are his duties, and I fulfil them to the extent of my abilities. Once more, what do you want with me? I observe Easter, I fast Friday and Saturday, I cause no scandal, I confine myself to the duties of my condition of life. . . ."

"Fools! who do not see that this hateful indifference condemns them to live in France as English travellers live in Boulogne or in Touraine, with no other rights but those of their wealth, enjoying the mildness of the climate, the sunshine, the roads, the waters, the material security which surrounds them, but strangers to all the rights, indifferent to all the duties, which constitute a country!

"Yet, nevertheless, you have an imperious need of these social guarantees, the direction and employment of which you confide to strange and sometimes hostile hands. . . . You require

all the resources and refinements of civilised society; gendarmes to watch over your person and property; courts of justice to defend your rights as a proprietor against those who would like nothing better than to share with you; railways to transport you like the wind from your town-house to your house in the country; custom-house duties to protect the productions of your land or your manufactories. All these are necessary to you, and a thousand things besides, which make up the complicated mechanism of our social organisation, and which are the object of daily care from the public authorities. And you believe that you can conscientiously enjoy all these benefits by the sole right of paying your taxes (which in any case you would be compelled to do). You believe that as soon as you have received the tax-gatherer's receipt you are free to dedicate your intelligence and activity to the furnishing of an apartment or the building of a carriage—and that you are thus delivered from the necessity of paying to society in addition, as the price of the rights and liberties assured to you, the tribute of your understanding, of your self-devotion, of your watchfulness, and, if necessary, of your fatigues and dangers.

"Alas! yes—this is what they believe and how

they act. Ah! if the many Frenchmen who behave in this pitiful way; the remnant of that ancient nobility which sets its pride on emulating in luxury the new men of money, without succeeding in it; the attenuated youth which has nothing manly but its beard; the melancholy Catholics, the unworthy Frenchmen who see their religion and their country betrayed without shame; if they require a banner to carry at their head, certainly the ensign to be given them is that *sudarium*, that napkin spoken of in the Gospel, that ignoble cover in which the useless and slothful servant wrapped up the talent which his master had given him to be put to profit. 'Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. . . . And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

"'I confine myself to my own business.' What shall we answer to these fools and cowards? We say to them, 'If this is not your business, make it so, for your own salvation, and for that of all.'"

Thus the intrepid advocate of constitutionalism uses every means to move his sluggish audience, taunting it bitterly, warning it solemnly;

sometimes imploring, sometimes stooping to the merest details. We add but one other extract, in which, bending from all this scathing indignation and brilliant invective, he points out to his clients the very alphabet of political life, and teaches them how to make use of its earliest and simplest weapons :—

"All that is wanted is to enter public life with an object to which everything tends, and taking as a rallying-point Free Education, or, in other words, religious education guaranteed by common liberty. There is no assembly or constituted body in France, from the smallest municipal council up to the Chamber of Deputies, where this great question of education does not come under discussion at least once a-year—now by some question of the salary of the village schoolmaster, or the choice of the Sister of Charity; now by the vote of the budget in respect to public instruction — besides a thousand other causes of debate. . . . There is scarcely a question which interests the public, in which the fate of childhood and youth is not concerned, and there is scarcely a question which concerns childhood in which the University does not find itself opposed by right views and sound sense. Catholics, therefore, must present them-

selves everywhere with the resolution of struggling against it, and must come to some understanding among themselves, without distinction of class or political opinion, to confound the common enemy. They must descend into the electoral arena, whenever it is open to them, with a decided and settled scheme of action, without political alliance or personal rancour, combined by the purpose of rejecting in their electoral capacity, by all legitimate means, the men who will not engage themselves to work with them at the complete enfranchisement of education in France. They must plant this new but open and generous banner in the midst of all elections, municipal, departmental, or general—everywhere, in one word, where our happy constitution calls Frenchmen to proclaim loudly and freely their interest in public matters, and their attachment to the precious rights with which they have been invested. In many localities, Catholics, if they would but reckon and discipline themselves, would find that they alone constituted the majority: in almost all they form that nucleus of votes, so much desired in electoral struggles, which might almost always secure the triumph of the candidate whose promises in respect to free education were the most satisfactory."

Thus Montalembert schooled his party out of doors. He returned to the assault again and yet again. He left them no practicable shelter from the storm of eloquence with which they were assailed. "When I received your letter," he writes in September 1844 to Mr De Lisle, "I was still in the thick of the struggle which I have been unexpectedly called upon to lead and direct among the Catholic laymen of France. The most laborious and difficult part of this struggle does not, as might be conceived, consist in the public exertions and field-days on which we are obliged to display whatever we may possess of strength and courage, but much more so in the everyday tear of mind and spirit which is necessary to cope with the interior difficulties of our cause—to accustom the slow and fearful to open warfare, to discipline the unruly, and to enlighten those whom we are obliged to follow and respect even when they are led astray. Almost the whole burden of this most fatiguing work falls on me."

The success of this determined effort to rouse his fellow-believers to the importance at least of this one question, seems certain from the result; and at all events it is evident that, if any party in France could remain in ignorance of its political duties, or the power which lay within its reach

by their exercise, it was certainly not the so-called religious party, the good Catholics whom this fiery leader, with English blood in his veins, and English Parliamentary principles, headed in all their struggles. Sounder constitutional teaching could scarcely have been bestowed; and while he thus expounded their duties to his followers, delivered lectures to them on the principles of constitutional government, placed minute programmes of action in their hands, and trained their unaccustomed feet in the Parliamentary way in which they should go, he was at the same time labouring, fighting, contending, in his place in the Chamber of Peers, with a never-flagging enthusiasm and energy. Sometimes with his two or three sons of crusaders round him, sometimes alone, undaunted, and invincible, he used every weapon that his genius gave him for this one object. Strangely enough, it turned out, in the experience of the peers his colleagues, that almost every subject brought before them had some side by which it connected itself with the question of Free Education. Sometimes the Chamber was convulsed by his boldness. M. Villemain, one of those much-suffering Ministers of Public Instruction who were the objects of his perpetual assaults, bitterly complains of him that he had *l'audace*

de tout dire. "*Vous passez toutes les bornes,*" says the Chancellor, the Speaker of the august assembly, on another occasion. Sometimes he is taken to task for unparliamentary language, —and he scarcely ever rises to speak without being interrupted from one quarter or another by the "*Je demande la parole!*" of some aggrieved minister or peer. These signs of the power and boldness of his speeches are scattered through the pages which contain them with amusing regularity; and yet, though he was impatient of every artifice, and merciless to every falsehood, we do not remember any instance in which he is accused of making an unfounded charge, or of carrying Parliamentary hostility beyond its most distinct and honourable boundary. He was vehement, for his sense of right and wrong was vehement; he was indignant, but with just reason; he was angry, but he did well to be angry. No personality is to be found in his bold assaults; they attack the system, the law, the government, the modes of action, but never the men.

Here is an instance of the bold way in which he carried the war into the enemy's country. The *Mandarinat* of the University was, no doubt, a name that lasted, like his *fils de Voltaire.*

"Since the time when Christianity transformed the world, there has never existed in the most absolute States any idea of exclusive and direct intervention on the part of the Government in education, until our own days. This fatal doctrine is founded in the past on the authority only of Minos, Lycurgus, and Robespierre—that is to say, on a fable, on paganism, and upon something worse than paganism. Always and everywhere, whatever degree of authority the State reserved for itself in respect to education, in Protestant countries as well as in Catholic, this task has been specially allotted to the Church—to the clergy which holds its rules, its traditions, its obligations, its being, independent of the State, and which thus shelters the conscience and the family from all the tempests, revolutions, variations, and excesses of temporal authority. At the present time, when the Church reigns only over a part more or less considerable of society, it is just and necessary that those who reject its authority should find another resource; and freedom provides for this necessity without difficulty and without doubt. But that is not considered enough. What is demanded is, that a mandarin class, which recognises no supernatural faith, no unchangeable doctrine, and which makes of

philosophy a veil to cover the most ill-suited and contradictory ideas—that a class of mandarins (*mandarinat*) thus composed should usurp, in the name of the State, the most delicate and sacred moral authority, pretend to exercise a high police over souls and intelligences, and lay its hand upon what was once the exclusive domain of religious faith and obedience. At present the State is not only a lay State, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs announced yesterday, for there would be nothing new in that—all States have been and are lay, with the exception of the Ecclesiastical State so called. But there are two ways of being non-ecclesiastical for States as well as for individuals. There are faithful and religious laymen, and there are laymen who are infidels. At the present moment the State is infidel, officially infidel; . . . and this is the moment which has been chosen for usurping functions which the State has never heretofore exercised, and for transforming into questions of police the most sacred duties of paternity as well as the private rights of the conscience—liberty of education as well as liberty of worship."

With what countenance such men as Cousin

and Villemain, guides of the speaker's youth and high authorities of his early days, must have heard themselves denounced as mandarins, we will not attempt to indicate. They had trained and developed and encouraged the youthful flights of him who now turned his weapons thus against them; and perhaps a certain pride in their pupil blunted the stinging edge of his satire, as it thus stigmatised them, with one of those happy definitions which are more telling than argument. With the keen activity of an eye educated to note sophistries and false conclusions, he divined every weak point in their armour, and aimed his rapid javelin at it without hesitation or timidity. Here is another passage in which he detects and exposes with merciless distinctness the hasty and foolish assertion of another member of the Government which in this particular he so hotly opposed :—

"It is with difficulty that one believes one's eyes when one reads in a report emanating from a man so eminent as the Duc de Broglie that the state of things as existing in Belgium [in respect to education] is without example in the world. What, gentlemen! is it possible that the Duc de Broglie does not know that there

are two countries which are called England and the United States of America? And if he knows them, how can he ignore what passes there? Is he not aware that in the immense country which is called to such great destinies —in North America—there is not the slightest trace of the preventive interference of Government in teaching? But, notwithstanding, education is as universal there as it is free; and if, as is natural, adapted to the genius of a people which has no past, and chiefly occupied with professional and technical science, it is free from all the dangers of which a fictitious tableau has been presented to us. It is even profoundly moral and religious. Let him consult one of his most illustrious colleagues of the Academy, and M. de Tocqueville will inform him that religious sentiment is that which preserves republican society in America from anarchy, and that this religious sentiment proceeds from education; because education, completely free from all governmental police regulations, is conducted, thanks to that very freedom, by the clergy of the different religious confessions.

"And England, is not she a country which may be studied without shame, and whose example may be pondered seriously, whatever M. le Duc de Broglie may say? The honourable

M. Cousin and M. le Comte de Saint-Priest have enlarged upon the disastrous consequences of free teaching, upon its incompatibility with all social regulations. Is there, then, a social order in England, yes or no? and is that social order lacking in energy, boldness, unity, or intelligence—in all that makes the glory and safety of nations—yes or no? Free education exists there to a point which no one has ever asked in France, for even the supervision of the State is unknown; yet no frightful consequences have been seen to disclose themselves. Among the many discussions which have taken place in the course of various difficulties in England, does any man recollect to have heard them imputed to the absence of State education? I have no time to explain here the mechanism of the English universities in respect to the degrees of graduates, which, besides, are only of real use to the ministers of the Anglican Church. . . . But I assert, and no one can contradict me, that there is absolutely nothing in England which resembles our *baccalauréat-es-lettres* as an indispensable condition of entrance to every career. I assert, and no one can contradict me, that, in respect to the higher class of education, any man is perfectly free to open a college there, and to teach in it—to make use of the

expressions of the Duc de Broglie—'what he will, to whom he will, and as he will,' without being compelled to submit to any surveillance whatsoever. . . . The Duc de Broglie and M. Cousin must learn this, and I beg the Chamber to recollect it."

Notwithstanding this very distinct statement, M. Villemain, we find in the after discussion, took it upon him to assert that this account of English freedom was not correct, since in England universities existed which were founded by royal charter. "I accept no contradiction on this subject," cried Montalembert, all his English blood swelling in his veins. With this example of England he was always ready to confound his adversaries. He brings it forward to baffle the minister who interferes with the father's right to educate his child as he will; and the same example serves him to confound that father's weak excuses for making no stand against the tyranny. On both sides he uses the same weapons, he wields similar arguments. It is a twofold struggle with the rulers within and the ruled without. Seldom has such a double duty fallen upon any champion's shoulders. He is like the captain of a doubtful battalion defying the foe before him with all

the vehemence of perfect determination—then, turning to the wavering rank behind him, storming, entreating, imploring them to stand fast. The attitude of this one man between that phalanx of resolute opponents and the shifty mass of irresolute followers, is as curious and interesting as any political position ever was. He had his lieutenants, no doubt, in Parliament and out of it. But he himself is the only figure remarkable enough to attract the regard of the stranger. He stands before us turning from one to the other, never wearied, never flagging, maintaining an endless brilliant debate now with one set of objectors, now with another, prompt with his answers to every man's argument, rapid as lightning in his sweep upon every man's fallacy—now proclaiming himself the representative of the Catholics of France, and pouring forth his claim for them as warm, as urgent, as vehement as though a million of men were at his back—and now turning upon those very Catholics with keen reproaches, with fiery ridicule, with stinging darts of contempt for their weakness. Thus he fought single-handed, confronting the entire world. Nothing daunted him, neither failure nor abuse, neither the resentment of his enemies, nor the languor of his friends. His life appears to us at this period

like a great Rhine river of energy and spirit, flowing swift and strong, and full of splendid power, "abounding and exulting" in its own activity and strength. No prevision was in his mind that these powers could be checked or that activity quenched. He rushed on upon his way, sometimes impatient, sometimes hot-headed, not always Parliamentary in his language, bold enough to say everything, as his adversaries reproached him, yet never making a false accusation or imputing a mean motive. In this particular the *fils des croisés* maintained the traditions of his race. No one hotter in assault, none more tremendous in the onslaught. But he did not know what it was to strike a stealthy or back-handed blow.

Yet he had abundance of such blows to resist. It is not from this controversy that we have to learn that of all bigotry and intolerance there is none more intense and acrid than the intolerance of the men who profess no religious belief towards those who do. All that has been said of the bitterness and weakness of ecclesiastical invective is true of the violent and insulting language used by secular politicians in France whenever the commonest claim of rights brought the religious party into conflict with them. The Sacristy was their gentlest title for that party,

even when represented by a man like Montalembert; and all kinds of evil names were pelted at it, names much more ill-natured, but unfortunately not so witty, as that distinctive title of Mandarins with which he had adorned the University. Among ourselves there is no doubt much apathy and impiety; but no Minister of State, no man of high political standing, whatever might be his opinions, would ever venture in England, in his public capacity, to scoff openly at religion or undervalue its power. The attitude of Government in France, however, as represented by its officials—from the Minister of Education or of Public Worship down to the Professors, who, publicly declaring themselves to teach in the name of the State, declaimed against Christianity—had scarcely a show of impartiality or justice. "Soyez implacables!" was the advice of a member of the Government when recommending to the legislature resistance to the claims of the religious party; and public opinion seems to have been so warped on this point as not even to have descried the supreme foolishness and bad taste of such advice from such a quarter.

We should but fatigue the reader did we enter into all the variations of this campaign. The religious party—the Catholics of France,

or, to speak more distinctly, M. de Montalembert—gave the Government a great deal of trouble. He forced them into repeated attempts at legislation on this subject—attempts which satisfied no one, and which professed to give additional facilities for free action without yielding the principle of freedom—in short, to grant small instalments as a privilege of that which was demanded as a right. The discussion at last and temporarily came to a conclusion upon one article which was maintained by the Government with stubborn determination in every *projet de loi*, and which absolutely prohibited all members of religious Orders from opening schools or teaching in them, whatever their other qualifications might be—a stipulation specially aimed at the Jesuits. On this one point the attack and defence finally concentrated. Montalembert made himself, as was inevitable, the champion of the Orders assailed. He proclaimed hotly and loudly their right as French citizens to a share in all the liberties granted to their countrymen. At this very period the two greatest French preachers of the time—Lacordaire and Ravignan—one a Dominican and the other a Jesuit—were moving all Paris from the pulpit of Nôtre Dame; and nothing could have afforded a greater point of vantage to the orator, who

could turn with indignant pride to two men who recalled the old glories of the French pulpit, yet who were incapable by law of teaching the rules of grammar to a class of urchins. With vehement eloquence he pointed out how three classes of men alone were absolutely shut out, whatever their acquirements might be, from the office of teachers—these three being galley-slaves, convicts who had served out their time—and monks!

The result of all this persistent comment and agitation was that the French Government, harassed and exasperated, did exactly what one of its own schoolmasters might have done after long worrying by unruly pupils. It gave no redress, and acknowledged no wrong. What it did was to seize upon a victim. It confessed its own failure in argument by an act of oppression. By representations made to Rome, and by rummaging out old prescriptive laws of the time of the Empire, it obtained an order from the General of the Jesuits requiring the dispersion of the Society of Jesus in Paris, and of the novices about to enter the Order. With this triumphant piece of intolerance the controversy closed for the moment. It closed with what seemed a victory for the secular party; but such victories are of no very stable dura-

tion. To close the mouth of an adversary forcibly, and send him out of hearing, is a mode of argument very common with Governments, especially in France; but even in France it seldom answers. And the reader will have little difficulty in imagining what a glorious opportunity this arbitrary act gave to the eloquent champion of freedom, who watched every step of his opponents with unwearying watchfulness. The unpopularity of the Jesuits had been one of the worst stumbling-blocks in his own path. He had accepted it, because honour and justice forbade that a popular prejudice, however virulent, should be considered a reason for depriving any class of the rights of citizens; but it had been an embarrassment, and burdensome to the cause of freedom. "You have delivered us from that embarrassment," he cried. "No man can now raise the phantom of Jesuitism in the face of those who demand the freedom of the Church and of education." With a bold and vigorous hand he sketched out the University and its monopoly as a city besieged and surrounded by an army bearing the flag of the Charter. The defenders had made a vigorous sortie; they had fallen upon the weakest and most exposed flank of the assailants. The step was well imagined, and it had succeeded;

but what then? It is thus that he demonstrates its utter inefficiency:—

"The sortie has been made, and it has succeeded; although with its success, and even by its success, this able and useful diversion has finished. But, on the other hand, the siege of the monopoly continues, and will continue. . . . The question of education remains exactly where it was. The question of religious liberty, so often contested here by myself and by others, is still untouched. An attempt had been made to confuse both with the cause of the Jesuits; and both ran a certain risk of being confounded with that, and perhaps losing themselves in it. But that is no longer possible — you have disentangled the maze. I do not thank you for it —far from that; I do not congratulate you on what you have done. I state simply from my point of view the true effect of the step you have taken. . . . Understand well that nothing is ended. Up to this point we remain erect, with one hand on the Gospel and the other on the Charter; we claim everything we have ever claimed, we diminish in nothing our just pretensions, nor the courage with which we demand them. We await you next year upon the same ground."

This speech, the last of the great campaign, is concluded by a personal statement, which the reader will appreciate, and which breathes the very spirit of Montalembert's character and work. Many and divers had been the accusations brought against him. One minister, M. Villemain, had declared that he was no representative of the Church, but a pretender to that office; another, M. Martin (du Nord), had scoffed at him as the very Church embodied, the inspirer of all its factious resistances. At the temporary end of the war the champion thus assailed puts forward his own personal ensign, and exhibits the unchanged device upon his own spotless shield.

"It is known that I maintain this war at my own charges, without hoping for either encouragement or recompense, taking counsel only with the honour of the Church and my own, and always ready to sacrifice what is mine. I fight without ever losing sight of the rights and interests of freedom—of that freedom which, in spite of all checks, mistakes, and recantations, will always remain dear and sacred in my eyes, and of which I shall never despair."

Thus ended, or seemed for the moment to end,

an outburst of constitutional agitation, such as France had not seen before. The Government had not been vanquished, nor the monopoly overcome. But the University already trembled in its stronghold, and the Government had been led into some of those weak violences which are as distinct a confession of failing strength and baffled argument as any concession. The victory was still some way off, but it was coming. Montalembert did not relax his work. The dispersion of the Jesuits had scarcely been accomplished when a circular was addressed by the Electoral Committee for the defence of religious liberty, signed by Montalembert as president, to all its local agencies, urging further and further exertions. And expressions of sympathy and encouragement reached him from all quarters. Addresses came to him from "three hundred young Catholics" in Paris; from the College of Louvain in Belgium; from the Catholics of Lyons, and from many private persons, bidding him God speed. His answers to these addresses are all so many new lessons in the art which he was so eager to teach to his countrymen. "It is time," he cries, "for Catholics to descend into the arena of public life to defend the greatest of causes without reservation. . . . Let us bless God that we have been born in a country which has

gained that political liberty by which we may hope to attain religious freedom. Let us take advantage continually of publicity, of the freedom of the press and of speech. Let us put these new and invaluable arms to the service of the old cause which shall never perish." Thus he proceeded on his twofold career. He fought for the right of educating his people religiously, and he went on educating them politically—an effort still more personal and scarcely less important. These two objects together were the inspiration of his life.

The satisfaction with which he regarded the work done, yet his humble and simple view of his own incompetency to conduct such a crusade, are well expressed in the following letter :—

"*August* 26, 1846.

"We have surely sufficient reason to be more united than ever in our devotion to the Catholic cause, and in our gratitude to the Almighty for the immense mercies which He has granted to both our countries. Do you remember, my dearest friend, our kneeling down in sight of the ruins of Fountains Abbey, and the prayer and the vow that we then made to Heaven that it might please God never to let us repose from action till the Church of our forefathers had

recovered her freedom and her rights both in England and in France? Little could we then suppose how near we were to the consummation of our wishes. Little could you suppose that within a few short years the Anglican prison would be shook (*sic*) to its very foundations, and that so many bright souls should rush forth from her dungeons and fall into our opened arms. Still less could I expect that the Catholics of France would break through the trammels of three centuries of despotism, Gallicanism, and Jansenism, and astonish the world by the energy and perseverance and the glorious unity of their efforts against the tyranny of bureaucratic rationalism. We have, indeed, made great progress, and the recent elections have given most unexpected proofs of our increasing strength; but things will not go on always so smoothly, and we must now look forward to more than one defeat, and particularly to the defection of some of those on whom we had relied till now. 'Quum infirmor tunc potens sum,' that must be our comfort. As for me, it has pleased God to call me up to a position for which I am really unfit, and which I can only occupy in default of some one much better calculated than I can be for such a responsibility. This some one is certainly existing somewhere, and he will appear

when necessary, and I shall be both proud and happy to recognise him as my chief. Till he arises to claim his right, I must do my best; but the consciousness of my utter unworthiness to fill the station I seem to occupy is a source of continual weakness and distress to me."

CHAPTER XIII.

PUBLIC WORK — *continued.*

THE course of the next two or three years was filled with the same indefatigable energy in public life. For the moment the question of education fell into the background so far as Parliament itself was concerned, but not in the other battle-field, where, by means of their political agents all over France, the electoral committee for the defence of religious liberty kept up and extended their agitation, leaving to the Catholic *dormeurs*, when once awakened, no possibility of falling back into apathy. The general election of 1846 called forth all their powers, and address after address, from the pen of Montalembert, stimulated and encouraged his party. Already he had made so much progress in modifying public opinion, that one of the most distinguished statesmen of the day had admitted, in his place in Parliament, that "children be-

longed to the family before they belonged to the State"—a very simple admission, it would seem, but one which carried in it the first premonition of triumph. The Catholics of Lyons, to whom he had lately paid a visit, and with whom, from the early days of the 'Avenir,' when he visited them on behalf of Lamennais's *Agence*, he had always kept up a certain acquaintance, paid him a public compliment. They struck a medal, bearing his portrait, with the motto, which had become proverbial in all men's mouths, "Nous sommes les fils des croisés et nous ne reculerons pas devant les fils de Voltaire." Even in acknowledging this compliment, the indefatigable chief urged again upon his friends renewed and continued exertions. "Government itself," he says, "has sent this question back to the electors. At the approaching elections all candidates must pronounce themselves, before everything, upon liberty of conscience; and Catholics everywhere must act with energy, union, and devotion." "Let us, then," he adds, "hold our votes at the disposition of candidates, *whatsoever may be their flag or their party*, who will promise us the immediate destruction of the monopoly of the University." At the same time circulars, all of which are to be found in the recent editions

of his works, were sent by the same unwearied hand all over France, calling the electors to the combat. The Parliamentary tactics which he enjoins upon them are such as we are very familiar with in the history of political agitations; and though it may be a matter of question whether it is the highest political morality to send members to Parliament pledged to a certain principle in so arbitrary a way as that secured by the *mandat impératif*, yet there can be little doubt that the strength of the party possessed of such sworn servants is raised to the highest practicable rate. Not content with verbal pledges, here are the formal written engagements which, wherever it was found possible, candidates desiring the suffrages of the religious party were to be made to sign :—

Form of Engagement to be proposed for the Signature of Candidates :—

"I engage,—

"1*st*, To claim the freedom of education promised by the Charter, under the sole superintendence of public authority, outside of the University, and without any preventive restriction.

"2*d*, To demand legislative reform in respect to religious liberty, and to the connection be-

tween Church and State, so as to reconcile the Charter and the Concordat.

"3*d*, To vote against all measures which can restrain the right of religious association and of monastic life."

This was followed by a second form of engagement, in respect to education :—

"I engage,—

"To claim liberty of teaching, which includes:

"1*st*, The equal right of every citizen not under the ban of the law, to establish schools, and to teach, without previous examination or special licence, and without making the affirmation prescribed by the law of June 1828.*

"2*d*, The equal right of all educational establishments to exist, under the supervision of the State, without any obligatory inspection or examination by members of the University, either of the professors or scholars.

"3*d*, The equal right of all pupils to be admitted to the examinations without certificate, or any other precaution intended for the exclusion or less favourable treatment of the pupils of certain establishments."

* Which required a declaration that the applicant was not a member of any religious order.

"Exact precise engagements," (*mandats précis*), says the anxious adviser while sending these forms—"exact, above all, engagements signed. A verbal promise often lacks precision, and gives opportunity for ambiguous meanings or misunderstandings: written engagements remain such as they have been accepted." At the same time he urges upon his followers the fact that all the responsibility which a member of Parliament has in his place, "an elector also has in the electoral colleges;" at the poll, as we should say. "In such a case, to vote is less a right than a duty; not to vote is at once a mistake and an act of treason. . . . Each of our friends, then, must act and vote. Inertness is guilt, and he who remains mute denies his faith." And he adds, with that epigrammatic force which had already given precision to his definition of friends and foes, "Every soldier who is not in the ranks of his company on the battle-day is a deserter."

These unceasing exhortations had a reward not perhaps proportionate to the labour, yet giving promise of better things; and when the lists of the new deputies were finally made out, Montalembert was able to congratulate his friends that a hundred and thirty members of the new Parliament were formally pledged to

the cause of religious and educational freedom. There was, however, for the moment, no occasion to test their fidelity. So far as Parliament itself was concerned, a lull had taken place, and the eloquence which so long had flowed in one channel was now set free temporarily for other subjects. In the years 1845, '46, and '47, we find Montalembert in the position which he had already more than once assumed as the defender of all oppressed nations and parties. The Christians of Syria, the ever-unfortunate Poles, and the slaves whom France had not finished emancipating, all called forth his sympathy and vehement support. He was now as ever the champion of whosoever was unfortunate—a champion so ardent, so unwearied, and uncompromising, as to call forth continual plaints from all who were on the side of oppression. Thus we find his indignant remonstrance against the massacre of Polish insurgents in Gallicia in 1846, and the annexation of Cracovia, exciting against him the equally indignant abuse of the German newspapers—abuse excusable enough in itself, but mixed up with imputations of interested motives which were as absurd as they were futile. These energetic and impassioned protests against tyranny, however displayed, came to a climax in a great speech upon Switzerland,

delivered in the very beginning of 1848, at the time of the defeat and downfall of the alliance of Catholic cantons which called itself the *Sonderbund*. This defeat had been attended by many insulting and cruel demonstrations of power on the part of the victorious Protestant party. The religious feelings of the Catholics had been outraged, and monastic communities dispersed. In this latter step, indeed, the victors went so far as to expel even the inoffensive and benevolent monks of St Bernard from their charitable house of succour among the mountains, and the equally inoffensive sisters of charity of the order of St Vincent de Paul. This was a new kind of tyranny, and it was one which stirred up the whole soul of Montalembert. That which he had condemned so strongly in kings and nobles and rulers, the dominant class accepted for centuries by the common prejudices of humanity, how was he to look upon it when exercised by men of the people—men who professed to act as representatives only, and as representatives of the one democracy of Europe which had stood its ground for ages, and which had been considered the very stronghold and birthplace of freedom? It is only necessary for the reader to recollect what Montalembert's senti-

ments were at all times in respect to democracy, in order to divine with what double wrath, what fury of indignation, he looked upon this breach of all principles of justice and toleration, this abuse of the only standing-ground and pretension to respect which democracy could possess.

Up to this time Montalembert's speeches had all been received with more or less favour by the noble assembly to which they were addressed—they had all been overbrimming with the eloquence of earnestness, and with much natural power of oratory. But this was his first great speech—the first which moved all men alike, and won for him one of those triumphs which belong to the orator alone—a victory such as eloquence gains now and then over all prejudices, even over principles, carrying its audience away on the full tide of mutual feeling with an *entraînement* and *abandon* possible to no other kind of mental influence. This fact gives it an interest which time has stolen out of the subject. Most of us have forgotten all about the Sonderbund. There is in its history a kind of vague shadow of the struggle between the Northern and Southern States in America. No great principle like that of Slavery was involved; but the same theory of independent State sover-

eignty which was maintained by the South was held by the Catholic cantons: and the Protestant, in asserting the supremacy of the Diet, occupied, in one particular at least, the position held by the North. All the circumstances of the brief struggle were aggravated by the air of religious warfare which was thrown upon it, and by the insults offered by the conquerors to the faith of the vanquished. The chief political importance, however, of this little civil war—a war supposed by many foreign politicians to have been specially instigated by Lord Palmerston—lay in the fact that it was the first act of a new cycle of revolution, the key-note of all the troubles and mistakes of the year 1848. This Montalembert seems to have divined, although he was far from divining that the next scene of the lamentable drama was to be played in France; and his foresight combined with his horror of injustice to rouse him to double warmth. For the first time a thrill of patriotic fear—terror of the very liberty he loved—seems to have come over him; or rather a fear of the excesses committed in the name of liberty—of that false freedom which has done more harm to real freedom than tyranny itself has ever been able to do. He was not afraid of any accusation of inconsistency in thus disowning the false Duessa

who had put herself in Una's place, but boldly, uncompromisingly, without a moment's hesitation, attacked the wrong which had been done in freedom's name.

"I hold, for my part" (he said), "that the conflict in Switzerland has not been against the Jesuits, nor for and against the sovereignty of cantons. The battle has been against you, and for you. That is to say, a wild, intolerant, unregulated, and hypocritical liberty has combated that true, sincere, orderly, tolerant, and lawful freedom of which you are the representatives and defenders in the world. What was in question on the other side of the Jura was neither the Jesuits nor the independence of cantons; it was order, European peace, the security of the world and of France; and these have been vanquished, smothered, crushed, at our very doors, by men who ask no better than to throw the burning brands of discord, anarchy, and war from the Alps and the Jura into our midst. Thus I do not speak for the vanquished, but to the vanquished, vanquished myself—that is to say, to the representatives of social order, rule, and liberalism which have just been overcome in Switzerland, and which are threatened throughout Europe by a new invasion of the barbarians.

. . . Last year at this same time, about this same day, I denounced at this tribune, in the midst of the marks of your sympathy and indulgence, a similar crime, the incorporation and confiscation of Cracovia; and to-day I am again called upon to denounce an unworthy violation not only of the right of treaties, of that political right which I respect and esteem, but of a right superior to all others, the right of men, of nature, and of humanity, if I may use an expression common to the present time. The crime is the same to my eyes. Last year the last remnant of the Polish nation was in question; this year it is the cradle of European freedom which is the victim of a similar attack. But last year the attempt was made by absolute monarchies, and this year it is committed by pretended Liberals, who at bottom are tyrants of the worst class. What we have witnessed was the same then as now—the abuse of force, the suffocation of liberty and right by brutal and impious violence—the violation of pledged faith, the reign of the greater number, the assumption by Force of Falsehood as its arms and attire. . . .

"There is, however, when I consider these two crimes, a difference which I cannot here indicate. The crime of last year, a crime of force, was committed in the name of force. This year the

crime is that of despotism, with the addition of hypocrisy, for it is committed in the name of freedom. To my eyes, this odious lie aggravates the offence, and makes it ten times more worthy of your indignation and contempt.

"Believe me, gentlemen, I do not come here to complain of religious or Catholic grievances. Yes, Catholicism has been assailed in Switzerland, as all the world knows; but all the world knows also that the wounds and defeats of religion are never incurable or irreparable, and that at bottom her business is to be wounded, persecuted, and oppressed. She suffers, but only for a time. She is soon healed and raised up—and out of these trials issues continually more radiant and stronger than ever. But do you know what it is which does not recover so easily, and which cannot with impunity be exposed to such attacks? It is order, peace, and, above all, freedom. This is the cause which I come to plead before you."

He then proceeds to assert his own right above all others to express his hatred and horror of this false freedom:—

"Let no one say, as certain generous but blind spirits have said, that radicalism is the exagger-

ation of liberalism; no, it is its antipodes, its extreme opposite. Radicalism is nothing more than an exaggeration of despotism; and never has despotism taken a more odious form. Liberty is reasonable and voluntary toleration; radicalism is the absolute intolerant, which is arrested only by the impossible. Liberty imposes unusual sacrifices on none; radicalism cannot put up with a thought, a word, even a prayer, contrary to its will. Liberty consecrates the right of minorities; radicalism absorbs and annihilates them. To say everything in one word, liberty is respect for mankind, while radicalism is scorn of mankind pushed to its highest degree. No; never Muscovite despot, never Eastern tyrant, has despised his fellows as they are despised by those radical clubbists, who gag their vanquished adversaries in the name of liberty and of equality!

"No one can have more right than I have to proclaim this distinction, for I defy any man to love liberty more than I have done. And here it must be said, I do not accept, either as a reproach or as praise, the opinion expressed of me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, that I was exclusively devoted to religious liberty. No, no, gentlemen: that to which I am devoted is liberty in itself, the liberty of all and in everything.

This I have always defended, always proclaimed; I who have written so much, spoken so much —too much, I acknowledge—I defy any man to find a single word fallen from my pen or from my lips which has not been devoted to the cause of freedom. Freedom: ah! I can speak without seeking fine expressions. She has been the idol of my soul; if I have anything to reproach myself with, it is that I have loved her too much, that I have loved her as one loves when one is young, without measure, without limit. But I neither reproach myself for this, nor do I regret it; I will continue to serve Freedom, to love her always, to believe in her always; and I can never love her more nor serve her better than when I force myself to pluck off the mask worn by her enemies, who wear her colours, and who seize her flag in order to soil and dishonour it!"

This indignant outburst was received with a burst of sympathy as great. He who up to this time had moved his audience to admiration, to resentment, to all the secondary sentiments, this day for the first time swept it with him headlong, in all the temporary passion of enthusiasm. "The Chamber was in ecstasy," says the Abbé Dourlens, taking his account from

the newspapers. "Half of the peers rose to their feet under the force of excitement; cries made themselves heard from all the corners of the hall; each new sentence and phrase was interrupted by bursts of applause. . . . After his speech, M. de Montalembert retired modestly into a corner of the left lobby, wiping his forehead. The waves of enthusiasm which had risen to the very tribune came to break at his feet. . . . M. Pasquier (the Chancellor) left his place to compliment the orator. Most of the peers hastened to overwhelm him with applause; the Ministers had preceded them in this homage; and even M. le Duc de Nemours was seen to leave his chair, and with a solemn step traverse the chamber, to join his congratulations to those which M. de Montalembert had already received." It is not necessary, however, to quote the "solemn" passage of the Duke of Nemours across the hall in order to prove the wonderful effect of this speech. It was delivered only a month before the Revolution, and its fiery assault upon radicalism meant more than was to be found in Switzerland. It went home to every man's bosom, and found an answer in the fears and excitement already rising in France itself. The calmest report betrays the emotion of the Chamber. M. Guizot, with

visible feeling, gave, in half-a-dozen words, the highest testimony which could be given by an opponent. "I do not share all the ideas of the honourable speaker," said the Minister; "I do not accept the reproaches he has addressed to the Government. But he has given expression to too many great, good, and useful truths, and he has spoken with a sentiment too sincere and profound to make it possible to raise any debate with him at this moment. I cannot introduce a purely political, and still less a personal question, after what he has just said. I have no reply to make to M. de Montalembert." And such was the emotion of the House that the sitting was suspended until its excitement had calmed down. Montalembert himself reports this, his first great oratorical success, in his journal. He records his "ineffable satisfaction" in having executed justice upon the Swiss and French radicals *and Lord Palmerston* (*ces scélérats*); and with natural pleasure describes how his colleagues crowded to congratulate him; how the old Chancellor, his steady friend, shed tears of delight, and one enthusiastic young peer kissed his hand. A motion was made that the speech should be printed by the Chamber; and though the Government prudently opposed this crowning proof of sympathy, yet the compli-

ment, coming as it did from an adversary, was not less flattering. For one dizzy moment Montalembert found himself "the idol of the Conservatives." No matter, he says in his private communings, so long as he is not their dupe.

While thus, however, striking a blow for the party of order, which was so soon to become the first thought of all serious Frenchmen, and discriminating between the liberty he had fought for all his life and that liberty of coercing others which is always more or less the gospel of revolutionaries, he had a few months before delivered a very grave address on the other side of the question. The subject of this was the general condition of France; and nothing can be more true or significant than the grave picture he presents of the defects of the Government, and the fatal points of weakness which it shared along with all subsequent Governments in France. No one knew that the country was then trembling on the verge of another revolution—a revolution much more disastrous in its consequences than the previous one, to which that Government owed its being. The text, if we may use such a word, of this speech, was the *mot* of Madame de Stael, that "the most popular constitution in France would be that which should proclaim, Each Frenchman shall have a

place." This Montalembert declared to be true; and he strengthened his plea against the system by asserting that all places depended on Government; that it was the prevailing idea of electors that the best deputy was he who obtained most places for his constituents; and that almost all places were given in view of the elections, to recompense services rendered or to weaken opposition. He represented the Government of France as "the object of a frightful hunt, in which the nine Ministers are pursued by four hundred deputies, with a certain number of peers to make up the tale;" and these deputies are in their turn "pursued and harassed by a hundred thousand electors, unwearied and eager for the fray, who leave them not an instant of repose or freedom." He pointed out that nothing was too paltry to be taken up by the spirit of centralisation, which bound upon the shoulders of the Government unendurable burdens, and sapped the spirit of the provinces by leaving no power nor responsibility in their hands. He described how the Minister of Public Instruction had to be personally consulted even about so small a matter as the establishment, in a remote little town of Brittany, of a humble little free school for girls, founded by a benevolent lady to teach the catechism and sewing; and humorously com-

pared the condition of the English Ministers, who at the end of the session were left free to shoot grouse and rest themselves, with that of their French brethren groaning under a hundred petty cares.

"For a French Minister the fatigues of Parliament, the great interests of the country, the great questions of the day, are but a small part of his labours. That which weighs upon him most heavily, with a daily and overwhelming weight, is the management of a hundred petty interests which are thrown upon him; the exercise of a thousand and one ridiculous and excessive occupations with which he is invested. Think, gentlemen," he cries—"I implore you, think of some means of breaking this yoke; and if it is impossible to re-establish self-devotion and disinterestedness—if these are virtues too old-fashioned, let us at least re-establish ambition—a noble ambition—that which will animate the deputies not to make profit of their district, but to govern their country; to put themselves at the service, not of miserable personal interests, but of political opinions, or even of political passions, for political passion is a thousand times better than this miserable struggle for private interest."

Thus unawares, inspired only with a passion of patriotism, grudging that his country should not be ruled by higher motives and better principles, this consistent champion of freedom warned the crowd of busy and self-absorbed legislators, each pursuing his own private hunt after promotions and advancements. He knew as little as they did what was coming; but he saw, as they did not see, that this poor way of working up the petty with the great, this *exploitation* of a country as if it had been a workshop, was a thing which could not stand in any evil day.

The great speech on Switzerland was made in the month of January 1848. In less than a month after, the Revolution had taken place. It scarcely seems necessary for us to enter into the well-known history of that event. It was an event which took the world by surprise, and which especially took by surprise the rulers of France, who up to the last moment deceived themselves on this point, and believed the rising tide of national passion to be nothing but a factious struggle which they could overcome as they had overcome others. No more tremendous proof could be given that France was as yet uneducated in those ways of constitutional opposition, to which Montalembert for years had been try-

ing to train his public, and which many of the leading men of all parties had attempted to take up, with a fond idea that the principles comprehensible to themselves must also be comprehensible to the people. There is something pitiful in the spectacle of those constitutional Anglomanes, the deputies of the Opposition, organising their banquets, and asserting their right of meeting, while the grim bands of the secret societies, the dormant Republicans of the old school, looked on and waited, musket in hand, to take advantage of the favourable moment—the opportunity opened to them all unawares by the Constitutionalists. "In spite of numberless checks, notwithstanding the dispersion or imprisonment of their most famous chiefs," says Regnault, in his 'History of the Provisional Government,' "the secret societies had never ceased to prepare in the background the means of overthrowing the Government. . . . At first they had regarded with disdain the legal agitation of the banquets conducted by the *bourgeoisie* and the Parliamentary party; but when public feeling began to get excited, and especially when the deputies of the Opposition made an imprudent appeal to the Parisian populace, they felt that the moment was propitious for attempting a sudden blow, and took the firm

resolution not to permit the movement to be arrested at the will of the dynastic agitators."

It is not necessary for our subject to enter into all the melancholy details of the most purposeless and the most severely punished of all revolutions. The only part taken in it by the subject of this memoir was that of a spectator. He who in his young fervour had been disposed to find fault with Providence for keeping him out of the Revolution of 1830, stood by now, a sadder and a wiser man, to watch the progress of this new overturn. The agitation of the time betrays itself in the private picture which, though much more brief than the revelations of the old journal, still comes in to supplement the record of himself which Montalembert has written in larger characters upon the face of his age. He records in a few brief words the general fright and excitement, the disturbed look of the town. Instead of spending the evening in some pleasant *salon*, as was his wont, he goes out into the agitated streets to get the last news. Of the people whom he meets, all are trying to reassure themselves by reassuring each other, and making tremulous prophecies that all will be well. Even then it seems to him that the people—the general mass as distinguished from the revolutionary

classes—are indifferent. When he goes home, he works in his study; all the ordinary habits of life, its occupations and amusements, the strain and stress of publicity, cease for the moment. Then comes one last melancholy meeting of the doomed Chamber of Peers — what a contrast from the excited crowd which gathered round him a month before with so much enthusiasm! Very few members of the Chamber were present, and very sad were Montalembert's thoughts as he came and went. His career, he concluded, was over. Of all the changes that must happen one was certain, and that was the extinction with the monarchy of that dignified Upper House in which all his political life had been passed. He was but thirty-seven; an age at which the tide of life runs highest, and giving up anything, whatever it may be, is hardest; and with a certain bitterness the orator who had just come to the full development and consciousness of his powers, the man who felt himself so strong and so willing to work in the service of his country, made up his mind that his public life was ended. He felt stunned and broken by the fall from that high position which he had just fully won at the moment it was thus taken from him. God gave, and God has taken away, he said to himself, with that faltering

voice of resignation which is so bitter in the middle of one's days.

The gloomy impression made upon him reveals itself simply yet clearly in the following little letter written to his two little daughters, Elizabeth and Catherine, the eldest of whom was but eleven, who were happily in Brussels under the care of their grandfather, while their parents were going through all the feverish suspense and agitation of the Revolution in Paris: "I am very sorry to be so long without kissing my dear daughters, without giving them their lesson in English, without walking with them, and counting their good marks," says the fond father, and then he adds :—

"Learn, my dear children, how unforeseen and how terrible are the judgments of God. There is no longer a king in France—your papa is no longer a peer; he will no longer make the speeches which you have heard so much spoken of. The moment is come for you to work well, for it is very possible that you may have to gain your own living by your work, like so many other little girls. Learn, above all, to serve yourselves; for we live in a time in which it is impossible to reckon upon the services of others."

Thus it is evident that the shadow of the first

Revolution, with all its terrors, intruded even into Montalembert's enlightened mind—a vague yet terrible fear of painful possibilities, both general and individual, which might be to come.

No doubt this sadness was much aggravated by the discovery that his dear friend Lacordaire, and several of the other members of his own party, had welcomed almost with enthusiasm the new change in affairs. Immediately after the Revolution, Lacordaire and Ozanam with some others began a newspaper, which, with all the freshness of the days of the 'Avenir,' they entitled 'L'Ere Nouvelle.' It is wonderful to encounter this fresh enthusiasm and faith in men who had weighed the Revolution of July and found it wanting. As warmly as if they had made no such previous experience, they seem to have thrown themselves into the new Revolution, once more hoping all things from the change, and believing in the new device of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, as if its appearance must charm away all ills. Lacordaire seems to have risen upon the sudden tide while his friend stood by watching, not approving, doubtful what was to come of it all. With the ordinary fickleness of popular feeling, the Catholic party seem even for the moment to have entertained the idea of con-

stituting Lacordaire their head and representative—an idea which Montalembert records without comment, but which can scarcely have been agreeable to him. At the same time he was himself invited, and indeed importuned, to take, in opposition to 'L'Ere Nouvelle,' the management of the 'Univers,' then as now a Catholic paper, and one of which he had himself been the principal founder, though, we need not add, its character and sentiments were then very different from those at present identified with its name. This invitation, however, Montalembert firmly resisted. Probably he felt that he had had enough of journalism. His best field of activity lay, or rather had lain, in another direction. He had, however, given forth one rallying note in the 'Univers,' immediately after the Revolution. "In this great and unforeseen change, we Catholics (*Catholiques avant tout*) have nothing to change," he said; and he exhorts his party to do its duty, to exercise its political rights, and to use its influence for the advantage of the country, whatever form of government that country may adopt. "None of us have a right to abdicate," he cries. Even at that moment, when he was really despondent and almost despairing, his instinct was to cling to the helm as long as he could lay a finger

upon it, rather than to let the ship drift, because the direction it took satisfied him no more.

How long his pause of discouragement and silence lasted we cannot quite make certain. The Peers were forbidden to reassemble, and Louis Blanc, from the very tribune where Montalembert had so often spoken, denounced the orator who only a month before had poured forth floods of eloquent indignation against the Swiss Radicals and all who were favourable to them. Perhaps this very denunciation roused the failing spirit of the man who at thirty-seven was little likely to retire voluntarily from all share in the management of the world; and on the 8th of March we find him once more at his post in the Electoral Committee, sending out another address in view of the elections for the Constituent Assembly, urging once more his fellow-believers to the poll, and calling upon them to recollect that the fate of the country was in their hands. By this time he too would seem to have been moved by some hope in the novelty of the circumstances. "If we cannot now win, secure, and proclaim our rights, it is because we shall have shown ourselves unworthy of them," he cries with all the energy which distinguished him in his days of warmest hope. "The Revolution which has just been accomplished will be the most

shameful and criminal of deceptions if it does not give to France all the liberties which we have so long and so vainly claimed"—and he repeats his minute instructions as to the tactics of every district, and the pledges to be exacted from candidates. A second address followed on the 15th of March. By the beginning of April Montalembert had made up his mind fully to the situation; and, the Chamber of Peers with all its privileges being abolished, finally presented himself in the only other field where public life was possible, and published an address to the electors, who had already nominated him in more than one department. The tone of this address, so perfectly in harmony with his past life, will show what were the ideas with which he confronted the future.

"I neither solicit nor desire the honour of sitting in the National Assembly. I am, to some degree, of the opinion of those who think that a new system requires new men. But many among you in various departments have spontaneously offered me your votes. I accept them, as I shall accept the commission of representative, should it be conferred upon me. To refuse it would be to desert the post of honour and of danger.

"You have a right, in return, to a profession of faith on my part. This is so much the more easy for me to make, that I will confine myself to recalling to you my past. I have nothing in it to disguise. I do not even make a pretence of finding anything in it to change. I have always placed in the first rank of my political doctrines that of the sovereignty of the nation. I recognised its right under the Charter of 1830; I neither can nor will question its work in the Republic of 1848. I believed in constitutional monarchy with a sincere and disinterested faith; I still believe that representative government has given to the country thirty-four years of peace, order, prosperity—and of a freedom, incomplete it is true, but without parallel in our history. However, God has abandoned it, and France has not defended it. I submit to the judgment of France and of God, and now think only of my duty toward the country and truth.

"I have dedicated seventeen years of my life to one single object—to the union of religion and liberty. . . . I have worked at this all my life, and I desire to work at it for ever. In respect to matters purely political, I have had but one banner—that of liberty in everything and for all. What I said with sincerity on the day when I ascended for the first time the tribune

of the Chamber of Peers, I repeat now, after an unheard-of revolution has passed over my words, 'Freedom is the idol of my soul!' I defy boldly any man under the sun to bring forward one single action of my life, one single word which has fallen from my pen or from my lips, which has not been inspired by the love of liberty. . . .

"I have been during all my political career in the Opposition. I never received, nor solicited, from the former Government, the smallest favour either for myself or my friends. But I am far from making this a ground of acceptance with the new power; for I sincerely desired to maintain the old system. I have wished to warn, to enlighten, but never to destroy it. I have always been ready to support and approve it when good had the victory over evil in its councils. I have loyally desired to see it enter on the way of progress and safety. Exactly the same dispositions move me towards the Republican Government. If political life is reopened to me by the suffrage of my fellow-citizens, I will work with good faith, and without the least reservation, to found the constitution of the Republic. Persuaded that governments in France do not perish with such deplorable rapidity except by want of sincerity or by

complaisance towards exclusive passions, I shall constrain myself to give to the Republican Government the first of all conditions of true greatness, devotion. . . . If this Republic, while ameliorating the fate of workmen, should guarantee, like that of the United States, to religion, property, and the family, the supreme benefit of liberty, it will not have a more sincere partisan nor a more devoted son than myself. But if, on the contrary, it follows the course of its predecessors; if it proceeds by the way of exclusion, of suspicion, of persecution; if it does not shrink from violence and confiscation,—it may well have me for an adversary or a victim, but never for an accomplice or a tool."

This address is dated the 3d April. Its tone of proud and generous independence is one which we should have supposed it would be impossible to misinterpret; yet we find M. Regnault in his History contemptuously quoting M. de Montalembert as one of the supporters of the old *régime*, who were turned into ardent republicans as soon as the triumph of the Republic seemed certain! To show the foolishness of this accusation, we have quoted the address almost in full. No position could be more dignified than that thus assumed by

Montalembert. He had opposed the past Government, yet he had supported it; and while opposing the present, he was still content to serve it for the good of France, who had chosen that way—not for his own. He, into whose pocket no penny of government money had ever found its way, to whom no patronage of any kind had ever been given, had surely the right to serve his country "all for love, and nothing for reward," without the possibility of any such imputation. It is more like the ordinary French tradition to retire from public life altogether, and sulk and conspire behind-backs; but such a course was not according to the nature of Montalembert.

While he thus roused himself politically out of his depression, there are signs that in other matters not only he, but Paris, awoke out of the stupor produced by the sudden change. The 18th March is recorded in his journal as the date of "the first *soirée* after the Revolution." We do not recollect at whose house the *réunion* was held, or even if it is noted in the brief record; but there is a mention of the appearance of Chateaubriand, now an old man, "a great ruin among so many ruins," among the guests. All of these guests were overwhelmed by the passing events, Montalembert tells us,

but none so much so as himself; yet we find, after a few days, that society began to console itself by as many as four *soirées* in an evening, where it met to consult over all that had happened. Here a curious little feminine note comes in, not derived (we need not say) from Montalembert's journal, but which throws a quaint light upon this strange moment, when society still heard in its ears the echoes of the musketry which had resounded through its streets, and felt itself under the impression of the barricades at the street-corners, the deadly silence and still more deadly din of lively Paris in its moment of convulsion. At these *soirées*, and in all social gatherings for some time after, there was no evening dress. The ladies wore nothing but morning dress, with a lace scarf or pelerine over their well-covered shoulders. It was no time to be *décolleté*—to think, or to appear to think, of the tricks of costume. We are not informed whether the highly undesirable compound of morning and evening dress which is common among Frenchmen took its origin in this time of trouble. If it did so, and if we owe the appearance of the evening coat hastily put on over the attire of the morning, to the exigencies of the time of revolution, it is a sin the more to be put down to the account of 1848.

But for this supposition we have no authority. French ladies have never at any time adopted the tradition of bare shoulders, which for many years was the only English rendering of evening dress: but the universal adoption of a simpler costume was a symptom which probably affected the public mind as much as any other of the changes of affairs. We believe that, in certain circles at least, the same change—one which, in many cases, is the better for grace and health as well as for sobriety—has signalised the late troubles in France, and that the ladies of the old imperial court, once so splendid, avow their downfall and humiliation, and make it into a fashion by the universal use of "high" morning dresses, on all occasions. This by the way; it is a trifle, but it shows how the mind of society is moved.

In the end of April, Montalembert was elected deputy for the department of Doubs, the old province of Franche Comté. He had himself personally no connection with the district, but his wife's family possessed estates in it; and the château of Maïche, situated in this department, became shortly after the property by inheritance of Madame de Montalembert. He acknowledged his election in an address published in May, in which he thanks his unknown friends for "the

greatest honour which can now be rendered to a French citizen," an honour all the more dear to him that "I had not solicited it, that I was personally unknown to you, and that my candidature was hotly opposed." He tells them that so long as he can he will represent them only by "a silent and disinterested vote," thinking it only just "that the new *régime* should be inaugurated by new men." "But," he adds, "you will find me in the breach whenever the great interests of society, the honour of France among foreign nations, or her liberty and prosperity within herself, shall be seriously in question." It was not long that this "silent and disinterested vote" was all that his country had of the new deputy. One of the first proposals of the new Government was a law by which the railways of France should become public property. This step was represented "not only as a financial expedient to re-establish public credit," but at the same time as "a reaction against the aristocratic movement which had been produced by the constitutional monarchy." In presenting this projected law, the Minister of Finance for the moment, M. Duclerc, "declared distinctly that the existence of great financial companies was incompatible with republican government." This principle, which

simply annihilated all the conclusions of political economy, was but one of many schemes of arbitrary interference with the laws which regulate labour, and are the foundation of national prosperity. The *Ateliers Nationaux,* which wrought so much mischief by their fatal and foolish attempt to make Government responsible for the daily bread of an entire class, were in full operation; and everything pointed to a speedy rule of the arbitrary, not, indeed, over men's minds or bodies, which is common tyranny, but over the laws of nature. Montalembert was one of the first to see the futility and the danger of such an attempt; and accordingly he opened his mouth for the first time in the new Parliament on the 22d June, to point out to his brother representatives, with all the power of eloquence, the fatal course upon which they were entering. He tells them that he finds in the project "an attack upon that right of property which is the foundation of all society, and upon that spirit of association which, in my opinion, is proper to democracy, the only remedy of its weaknesses, and the only guarantee of its advantages;" and after having fully argued the question on this fundamental ground, as "the first opening of the door to those fallacious Utopias which we all deplore," he makes

the following appeal to the political faith of his hearers :—

"It is still more than this; it is an infidelity to good revolutionary tradition. I say to the true, the good tradition of the Revolution of '89; for there are two—two which I distinguish clearly—the one violent, bloody, and rapacious, which I have always combated, and which I shall continue to combat whenever it is necessary—yes, always when it is necessary;—the other legitimate, liberal, and liberating, which I have always defended—yes, always defended, understand me fully! I have not waited for the day of the Republic to do this. I have proclaimed and professed it under the reign of two kings, and for this reason I have a right to take my stand upon it now.

"What, then, was done by the Revolution of '89, when it found itself in possession of immense public domains, taken from the nobility and clergy by means which I need not here qualify; but when taken, what was done with them? Was there any idea of making them the object of a State monopoly, or a State speculation? No. On the contrary, by a touch of marvellous genius which I have always admired, they were used for the wise purpose of identifying the

revolutionary cause with that sentiment so natural to man—the sentiment of private property. The vast wealth of which the Revolution had taken possession was immediately placed at the disposal of liberty, individual interest, and private capital."

This appeal is followed by a brief sketch of which everybody recognised the truth then, and which all who know anything of French country people will acknowledge now:—

"The French peasant esteems highly, and with reason, liberty and equality. He will esteem fraternity when he understands better what it means, and when it presents itself to him in a form such as perhaps it has never yet worn. But do you know what—it is doing him no wrong to say—he esteems still more? It is his sovereign right to his little patrimony, the free possession of the field which he has received from his father, and which he reckons upon leaving to his children. Now he knows that he holds this sovereign right to his field—this free possession, this full and entire property—from the Revolution of 1789. This is why he loves the Revolution of 1789 — why he has always defended it under all Governments, and

will defend it always. Yes, the mark of political talent, the greatest feature of genius in the Revolution of 1789, was thus to identify itself in the heart of the French peasant with the sentiment of property. Take care, representatives of the people, and you members of the executive government; take care, lest by your mistakes, and by the system upon which you are entering—I trust, in spite of yourselves—you do not identify the Revolution of 1848 in the mind of the French people with the ruin, or at least the unsettlement, of the rights of property. This law conduces to that result, and for that reason I oppose it. I oppose it because it is imperiously illegal, unjust, and impolitic."

This speech was interrupted by perpetual *agitations, rumeurs, vif assentiment, mouvements divers, réclamations*—every kind of disturbance. "I am not used to these interruptions, gentlemen," the speaker once paused to say, with a kind of rueful good-humour, "but I am here to reconcile myself to them, and I will do so." It was an experiment, of the success of which he would seem to have been doubtful, for nothing could be more unlike the dignified calm of the House of Peers than this

disorderly assembly; but he himself records, with a certain satisfaction, that his speech had "complete success." And, no doubt, it was with an exhilaration of being, and sense that power was yet in his hands to serve his country, that he received the congratulations of his friends. He records with frank natural feeling in his diary, that he is glad of it on account of the electors of Franche Comté who had chosen him as their representative.

This speech was delivered on the very eve of that insurrection of June, which for the first time thoroughly alarmèd France and Europe, and which was put down by the Generals Cavaignac, Lamoricière, and Changarnier. After this brief but terrible convulsion, the wheels of the Parliamentary machine were again set in motion, and for some time longer Montalembert continued the career which had been for a moment interrupted. He spoke in favour (unsuccessfully) of the erection of two Legislative Chambers in July; and made a solemn protest against the Constitution, then formed on the Principle of one representative Assembly, holding supreme and unassisted sway. In September he introduced his own special subject, that of free education, once more in the old strain, with singularly little variation from the style and arguments with

which he was wont to ply the Chamber of Peers, and with equal unsuccess. In this speech he made, however, an important and instructive addition to his old programme. "I even recognise a further right," he says, after allowing that the State should have the supervision and general inspection of all schools; "it is that of making up for the negligence or poverty of the father of a family. Yes, in this the State has at once a right and a duty. When the father neglects to fulfil his duty, or when he is incapable by reason of poverty, the State both may and ought to interfere." This is the only new point, however, in the address delivered to the revolutionary Chamber, which distinguishes it from those addressed to the constitutional House of Peers; and the attempt was as unsuccessful as in the worst days of the monopoly. The new Chamber listened to all his arguments without being moved by any of them. It listened impatiently, notwithstanding his eloquence. It rejected his proposal without taking much trouble even to consider it. If he had entertained any fresh hopes from the new Parliament for his favourite reform, they were at once balked; and now, as heretofore, the question was thrust back into the rank of those troublesome matters to be arranged some day, which neither in public

nor private affairs are ordinary mortals fond of grappling with. The only thing which distinguishes this speech from the many others delivered before it on the same subject, is an amusing outburst of revolutionary intolerance of which it was the cause. A few days after, ten foolish persons in Cherbourg took upon themselves to mark out Montalembert as the subject of denunciation. They addressed a petition to the Assembly (poor Assembly! with so little on its hands) against "le citoyen Montalembert," stigmatising him as a fanatical adviser of inhuman principles, an "orator whose conscience is sold to the enemy of France," and who had "obliquely proclaimed the re-establishment of the Inquisition, violation and venality of conscience, the brutalisation of the human species by ignorance, and the re-establishment of executioners, whose mission was to torture millions of victims." These wise men demanded, "in the name of humanity," a minute inquiry into this subject, with the view of sequestrating, without any unnecessary commotion, "the citoyen Montalembert." This was the only advance made, so far as free education went, by the change of affairs.

It is so much the more important to note this, that it forms a very evident turning-point in

Montalembert's career. Whether it was really that he found his old way of straightforward and downright agitation hopeless, or that the presence of friends in the Administration opened up to him new channels, or that the advent of middle age brought with it a new apprehension of the use and lawfulness of compromises and expedients, we cannot tell; but from the time of this last unsuccessful attempt to right the wrongs of Catholic France in the old way, his tactics and policy changed, in our opinion. Everything around him had likewise changed, from the time when he had begun his great agitation. Thanks to his work, and to that of his friends, religion and the Church bore a totally different aspect in France in 1848 from that which they bore in 1830. At the former period, when Montalembert made his first acquaintance with Lacordaire, the young priest wore the dress of a layman, it being unsafe to walk about the streets *en soutane*, in a clergyman's professional costume. At the later date, the same man took his seat in the Assembly itself as a representative, clothed in the habit of a religious order — the white gown and black mantle of St Dominic. This was but one external symptom of the change, but it was most real and notable. The Revolution of '30 pulled

down crosses and destroyed churches; the Revolution of '48 was reverent of all religious symbols, and called from Pius IX. thanks to God that no injury had been done either to religion or to its ministers in the midst of this great convulsion. So far the whole face of society had changed — a change due to the labours of Lacordaire and Montalembert more than to any other men. In one of the invasions of the Assembly by the populace, an insurgent, who had kept close to Montalembert all the day, seized an opportunity of telling him that he was specially charged to guard him from any harm, and, showing a rosary as a proof of his sincerity, added, pointing to the crowd which had occupied the building, that there was much good grain among those tares. The change made manifest by this and many other signs must needs have affected the minds of those who had produced it, and disposed them to listen to the overtures which in other circumstances would have had no attraction for them.

And there was, besides, another great reason for union which gradually dawned upon all the wiser and more moderate politicians in France, tending to obliterate differences and to promote the natural anxiety for some standing-

ground on which all true patriots might meet —the presence of a great common danger. The old ghost of past times which has reappeared in such force in our own day — that Terror which has seized the French imagination so often since its first revelation, had suddenly, after the easy and almost peaceable course of the revolution, risen up and faced the politicians of France in 1848 bearing the name of Socialism, as it has since borne that of Communism. Such an apparition had been but little visible in the Parliamentary days of Louis Philippe. It was but incubating in darkness and secrecy, where all evil things breed; and most of the enlightened class conceived it possible, with Montalembert, to take up the weapons of constitutional England, and to carry on with them a calm and legal warfare. But the time had come which had proved to these men that their reckonings were in vain. England had learned her lesson by the course of centuries; France had been supposed to have learned hers in a day. But nations do not so learn; and what with bad teaching and unhappy checks and interruptions, she has not mastered it yet. After eighteen years of calm, the men who, both in the Government and in the Opposition, had hoped to govern France constitutionally, sud-

denly woke to a perception of the futility of their endeavours. The legal oppositions, the banquets, the attempts at meetings, which they had made in their delusion, had but given the sworn foes of society occasions for displaying their force; and before they knew, they were standing opposite to a great vague mass of revolutionaries for revolution's sake, of men who disturbed the public peace for the sake of disturbance, of ignorant theorists who sought to overturn all social laws. Perhaps had the French imagination not received that permanent shock which the first Revolution gave, it might have acted more calmly, wisely, and with greater self-possession, when it perceived the resurrection of its old foe; but it is easy for us to think so, whose national imagination has never received any such shock. Certain it is that France was struck anew with that terror, and that all men who were on the side of order, on the side of government and good sense and reasonable regulation of human affairs, were driven to inquire, as they never had been before, what common ground they could meet on, and what bonds of union were practicable among them.

We reserve for another chapter the discussion of Montalembert's change of policy. Here we can but record the end of his old lines of attack

and defence. His denunciation of lawless liberty in the Swiss cantons, and his inability to find either listeners or sympathisers among the new men of the Assembly when he pleaded the cause of his life—the cause against which, theoretically, he had silenced all opposers—are two points of the utmost importance in his Parliamentary career.

No change, however, was visible in the transactions of this eventful year. Montalembert spoke in warm defence of the expedition to Rome, which had been sent off by General Cavaignac on first hearing of the Pope's flight—a step which, according to all the traditions of religious France, was a natural thing for the eldest daughter of the Church to do, and which, it is evident, carried with it the full concurrence of the nation at the time, whatever our opinions on the subject may be; and he took it upon him to urge with much fervour and a large mixture of playful irony, the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, which showed indications of a desire to sit too long, and consider itself a constitutional Parliament, as hastily convoked assemblies have a way of doing. Various little incidents, however, may be noted which helped to confirm the growing impression on his mind, that unregulated liberty was the

worst and most senseless of tyrannies. His neighbours in his country-house—the peasants of the district—had made a raid upon his trees at the first news of the Revolution. In the quiet of distant Burgundy, where no factitious excitement and no personal oppression could be, the country louts had considered themselves called upon to spoil the growing woods which their noble neighbour had planted as much with the idea of giving them work as of increasing the value of his land—in honour of a Revolution of which they knew little more than that it was likely to encourage rapine and ruin. This was a hard lesson for him so near home, and it was one of the lessons which go to a man's heart. He saw, too, that in the name of liberty a hundred artificial and impossible laws—laws not only limiting individual freedom, but binding nature herself, if nature could be bound, and annihilating every wholesome influence in order to form one Frankenstein-monster of a State—were being seriously considered. He who hated State interference, and centralisation, and the rigid force of system which is the moral weakness of his country, saw all those arbitrary and tyrannical things growing into new strength by what professed to be the popular will. He

whose belief in the individual was almost extreme, saw the individual about to be swallowed up in a blank tyranny of the abstract; and his heart burned within him as he looked on. And when he saw that for the moment all the best men in France, ignoring their political differences, were crowding about the wavering standard of Authority, making one desperate attempt to hold it high and plant it firm upon the very crest of Revolution, he too, in generous emulation, added his influence and strength to theirs. He put aside, not principles, but individual tactics—he modified his course that it might join in with that of others. And surely it is nothing but honourable and creditable to Montalembert that, with this horror of Anarchy before him, he should have consented to lay aside temporarily his old opposition, and range himself by the side of his honourable adversaries in order to make one last stand for that legitimate freedom which is not lawlessness, before the great flood should sweep in and carry him and all reasonable men away.

In October he records in his journal a first meeting with Prince Louis Bonaparte, and the favourable impression then made on him. "The Prince," he says, "showed no signs of incapacity,

and the good effect made by his manners was increased by the principles he professed." Prince Louis in these days hated centralisation, or at least said so, to the man who was known to hate it; and he was ready to take the question of Free Education into consideration, "though he would not say anything contrary to his conviction should it gain him a million of suffrages." Montalembert records these lofty sentiments with great satisfaction. We do not profess to be able to explain why, at the first outset, he supported the candidature of Prince Louis. Perhaps a something chivalrous and poetic in the idea of a Bonaparte thus dedicating himself and the *prestige* of his name to the welfare of France without hope of personal gain, or desire for it, influenced him unawares. Honour has its superstitions as well as faith, and this was one of them. It was shared by thousands less deeply interested and less personally capable of great deeds than Montalembert. To him good faith and self-forgetfulness were the most natural of attributes, and he believed in them in this individual case as in so many others. Thus, with gradual modifications of feeling stealing upon him, with a growing determination to resist Anarchy at all hazards, and a growing sense of the expediency of compro-

mises—that feeling that it is better to take what can be had than to struggle hopelessly for an ideal and impracticable right, which is natural to middle age, and which is also natural to every man with actual power in his hands—he pursued his course. He had begun the year sadly; but he ended it in a different state of mind, feeling, it is evident, that life, so far from being over for him, had never offered him so much to do, so many opportunities of serving God and his country. And though he allowed himself to complain now and then of the hardship of his new Parliamentary career, he entered into it with a spirit and fulness which cannot have been without enjoyment. "I hope you will think a great deal of your poor papa, who, instead of staying peacefully and happily in the country with all he loves, is obliged to return to Paris to be shut up and stifled in that frightful Assembly of which he is already so tired," he writes to his child in July '48; but yet this frightful Assembly stimulated him to some of his best efforts, and opened a new and brilliant chapter in his life.

To show, however, how his individual life was disturbed by these convulsions, and how dark were his prognostications, we quote the following letter to Mr De Lisle :—

"La Roche en Breny, *May* 8, 1849.

"Your reference to our pilgrimage to the Cistercian Abbeys of Yorkshire has moistened my eyes with tears of sweet memory, but also of deep regret at the thought of my dear historical and monastic labours so grievously interrupted and demolished by the shipwreck of our unfortunate commonwealth. Two volumes of introduction to the history of St Bernard I had not only written, but printed, when the last revolution broke out. The change of circumstances and a painful conviction of the imperfection of these volumes has decided me to suppress them and to begin again—but when and where, God only knows. . . . Silence, peace, retirement, hours of laborious leisure, are now out of the question, and will be so till some new revolution which may perhaps, if I am not devoured by the revolutionary leviathan, throw me on some unknown and solitary shore, where I shall, under God's mercy, resume my monastic labours;—till then strife, noise, and useless struggles against the revolutionary monster must be my lot. Pray for me that I may not sink under my burden, and, above all, that I may not forget and betray my own soul in the midst of the turmoils and distractions of political life, which is now nothing less than a constant battle

against the deadliest enemies that society has ever known. . . .

"I need not, even if I had time, enter into details about the state of France or Europe; we are all progressing onwards to the bottomless pit of socialism, which is nothing else but the logical conclusion of Protestantism and democracy. Nothing, I am convinced, can or will save us. Thanks to Louis Buonaparte, we have now a short halt on the road, but we shall ere long move on. As you most justly say, the day of Europe is past: she has sinned too deeply to be forgiven. Every power except the Church will be utterly destroyed; but let us beware of becoming to any degree the instruments or accomplices of the work of destruction."

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION.—"GOD AND SOCIETY."

THE year 1849 Montalembert himself records as having been "the most brilliant year of my life;" and it will be interesting to quote here the opinion of the great critic Sainte-Beuve, whose judgment we have already recorded as to his commencement of public eloquence. Sainte-Beuve, in his critical capacity, marks the era of 1848 as clearly as we have endeavoured to mark it. "It was only after 1848," he says, "that M. de Montalembert, accepting the leading of events, ceased to be a party orator in order to become an eloquent politician (*'orateur tout à fait politique'*). Up to that time he was admired, but not followed, except by those belonging to his immediate party. Now" (the article is dated 5th November 1849) "he is followed willingly by men from all parties. Not only the eloquence and brilliancy but the meaning

of his noble speeches is accepted and acknowledged. He has ceased to see everything from one point of view. He unites and combines two opposite principles. He has not given up his own convictions, but he has consented to enter into those of others—to take them into consideration and endeavour to harmonise his own with them. From this very endeavour have arisen an effort and restraint which have been favourable even to his eloquence. It is too easy and too simple to obey one direct and impetuous inspiration; the finest effort of human strength is to contain itself, to direct its course between different impulses, and to unite contrary principles under the same law. 'Greatness is not shown,' says Pascal, 'by going to one extreme, but by those who touch both and fill the space between them.' M. de Montalembert is no longer at one extreme; he has shown that he knows how to embrace both sides, and to keep his course between the two. He has left room in his mind for an understanding of the other side. Whatever may be a man's convictions, this is a great step made for practical truth. True talent has nothing to regret in the obstacles which thus come in its way. Energy gains by prudence; and the ripest eloquence loses nothing by it. In his last speeches, which are his most eloquent,

M. de Montalembert has proved this. He has merited the praise which M. Berryer gave him when he said: 'Yours is not an absolute, but a resolute mind.'"

The difference of style and meaning thus distinctly indicated, appears first, perhaps, in the speech upon the appointment for life of magistrates—*l'inamovibilité de la magistrature*—in which for the first time Montalembert, in April 1849, takes up the position of a successful legislator. Up to this time he had supported many a falling cause, and laboured for many whose success was yet uncertain. Now for the first time, when he took his brief from the hand of one of his old enemies—from that same M. Dupin, we believe, who not very long before had exhorted the constitutional Parliament, "Soyez implacables!"—and generously pleaded for the right without consideration of party or opinions, he was the successful proposer of a great public benefit. His plea was altogether disinterested, for he had, he declares, few friends and no relations in the magistracy; while, on the other hand, "the ideas which I maintain, and which I have habitually maintained—Catholic, or, if you will, ultra-Catholic and Ultramontane ideas—have never had more open

or more persevering adversaries than the honourable representative of whom I speak, and the French magistracy in general, both old and new." The magistracy had been irremovable—that is, appointed for life—in the days of the Charter; but the Provisional Government, in the eagerness of new-born power, had set itself to remodel this as well as so many other institutions; and the Constituent Assembly, before it was compelled to dissolve itself, made a dying struggle to secure to the Government the power of changing all law officers throughout the kingdom. Montalembert proposed as an amendment that all the magistrates in office should receive a reappointment, and that all the new appointments necessary should be made for life. He pointed out the evils of any system which should make judgeships in France tenable only from one revolution to another, and convert the magistracy into one of the objects of that "hunt" for promotion which he had before stigmatised as so dishonouring to all parties; and his argument came to a climax in one of those original and striking images which had so often thrown sudden light upon the subjects he treated, and by which his eloquence had always been distinguished. He had just spoken of the magistracy as the priesthood (*sacerdoce*) of justice:—

"Allow me to pause a moment upon the word priesthood, which I have just employed. Of all the weaknesses and follies of the times in which we live, there is none more hateful to me than the conjunction of expressions and images borrowed from religion with the most profane facts and ideas.

"But I acknowledge that our old and beautiful French language, the immortal and intelligent interpreter of the national good sense, has by a marvellous instinct assimilated religion to justice. It has always said, '*The temple of the law, the sanctuary of justice, the priesthood of the magistracy.*' I entreat you to accept, to respect this synonymous nomenclature, and to take it as your guide. What is it that has constituted one of the greatest principles of religious strength for the Church in France? Certainly I am not the man to omit or to forget the supernatural and divine origin of that power and authority which religion enjoys among us; but there are also natural and human motives which I love to acknowledge; and I declare that, in my opinion, the first of these natural and human motives is the permanency" (*inamovibilité*) "of the Church.

"Yes, three great political revolutions have passed over France since the beginning of the

present century—the Restoration, the Revolution of 1830, and that of 1848. But none of these have touched the Church; not a bishop in his palace, not a single curé in his presbytery, has been shaken out of his place. I do not hesitate to say that our population, seeing that immovable majesty of the Church survive and reign in the midst of agitations and revolutions, must have felt a sentiment of respect for that majesty in their hearts; and from this respect is produced, at least in part, the 'prestige,' the strength, the authority, unforeseen by many, with which she has found herself invested in the midst of the stormy circumstances which surround us.

"What is it, then, that I ask of you—I, the most docile, the most jealous child of the Church? I ask you to place by the side of this majesty and stability of the Church, to associate with her, the State, in the most august aspect of a State—in the administration of justice. This is what I ask of you; and I pity those who do not see in this demand the act of a good citizen and true friend of the State, whatever may be the form of government which sways it.

"Yes, gentlemen, revolutions have passed over the head of the priest without making it bow. I ask you so to act as that they may pass

over the head of the judge without affecting him. Let the stream of progress—if progress there is—let the destinies of the nation, or that which can be changed, if you like it better, in the destinies of the nation—roll their course between two immovable banks, between the temple of the law and the temple of God—between the sanctuary of justice and the sanctuary of truth——between the priesthood of the priest and the priesthood of the judge.

"Understand, gentlemen, there are already enough of ruins, enough of fragments, enough of shipwrecks, enough of mistakes, enough of troubles, in our country. I say it in the interest of society in general, in the interest of the Revolution and of the Republic herself. I say it in view of all revolutions—for those of the past as for those of the present and the future—for that which I accepted without aiding it, and that which I have submitted to without struggling against it. To all revolutions I say the same; they will be so much the more durable, so much the more popular, so much the more blessed, when they have the most spared and the best respected the institutions which they may find in their path."

The cause thus powerfully advocated was

won, and Montalembert found himself for the first time not only surrounded by universal applause, which he had experienced before, but by success, a new and unaccustomed sweetness. It is a curious and most characteristic fact, that this, the first political success he had ever won, the first motion of his ever carried, and bearing practical fruits, was not for himself or his friends, but for his political enemies—men who had struggled against him, condemned and often reviled him. Never was there a fitter triumph for a *fils des croisés*, and never a more signal demonstration of the high sense of justice and noble generosity of the man who had been so often stigmatised as a Jesuit and a Sacristan by the very class for whom he won this first victory. His own record of the fact is of the very briefest. He tells in his journal how he had gone to pray in St Germain-des-Près, his favourite church, where he went at all the great crises of his life, and in St Sulpice, where he always sought divine aid before his great speeches—but only adds the brief note, that he gained his cause, and that his speech had a great success. The solemnity of the effort is visible in his preparation for it, not in any flourish of trumpets over the accomplished work.

Immediately after this great triumph the

elections for the National Assembly took place, its temporary predecessor having at last been persuaded to dissolve itself after a stormy existence of about a year. Montalembert was elected by two constituencies—by his previous supporters in the department of Doubs, and by faithful and religious Brittany. He had also, which was still more remarkable, a very large number of supporters in the department of the Seine. He chose his first friends in Franche Comté, and kept faithful to those who had chosen him before. It was in the June of this year that the first sketch of the compromised and practicable law upon free instruction, framed by M. de Falloux, with the assistance of a large and influential committee of men of all shades of thinking, to which Montalembert generously gave all the weight of his support, was presented to the Assembly; but it was not discussed until a year later; and in the mean time, while working in his *bureau* or committee at the details of this project, Montalembert continued his career in the new channel which he had made for himself. Other changes as extraordinary, which were not changes but simple developments, followed the first change which had detached him from the absolute to seek the practicable. He who had been

continually in opposition under a Government which was according to his taste and commended itself to all his principles, became almost in power under a Government of which he disapproved, and which was against all his prejudices and sentiments. The reason of this was simple enough, as we have already seen; it lay in the fact that the existence of a great danger had roused every well-thinking man to a sense of the absolute necessity of supporting authority, such as it was; and so long as a momentary calm reigned, of making such laws as should be effectual against the next outburst of that wild freedom, which was not liberty but licence. The good men who had submitted to the revolution without approving of it found themselves constrained to stand by those who had approved and profited, but yet hoped to govern and restrain; and the good men who were in power clutched at every true and friendly hand stretched out to help them in the circumstances of unthought-of peril and difficulty in which they found themselves. Accordingly Montalembert's next public appearance is one which, but for this explanation, would fill us with amazement. He who had fought all his life for liberty of the press, liberty of instruction, liberty of conscience and speech, now sud-

denly appears before us—and that in a discussion upon liberty of the press—on the side of restraint. The position is one which takes away the reader's breath. It is a paradox which, however, Montalembert boldly confronts, and comments upon at once in his own person. "I began my public career fourteen years ago," he says, "by voting and speaking against the laws of September.* I appear to-day to vote and speak in favour of a law which, according to the previous speaker, is worse than the laws of September." In defending himself against this seeming contradiction he resorts to another of the similes which he always introduced with such powerful effect.

"How am I to explain the change which I have just pointed out in myself and in so many others? How—I do not say justify it, I hope we have no need of that—but explain it?

"Let us suppose a doctor called and consulted upon the *régime* necessary for a robust man, a man fit for all the exercises and labours of ordinary life—it is right for that doctor, in judging the condition of such a man, to order him a strong, substantial, and stimulating diet. This is what we did when we studied the tem-

* Laws against the liberty of the press enacted under Louis Philippe, and known by this name; see vol. i. chapter ix.

perament of France fifteen years ago; we believed her to be robust, capable of bearing the diet of absolute freedom which then existed. But if the same doctor is recalled at the end of ten years, and finds his patient exhausted by his own excesses, a victim to fever, shivering, and delirium, must he continue to recommend the same diet? If he did so, he would be no longer a doctor; he would be a madman, an ignorant fool, or an assassin."

This is the cause of the change in Montalembert's position; he finds his country no longer robust and healthful, but sick to death of false liberty—that lawless and limitless freedom to oppress, which he had so vehemently and indignantly condemned among the Swiss. And with the insight born of pain, he calls out with prophetic warning to his countrymen. "There is scarcely one step of transition between unlimited liberty and a dictatorship," he cries—"not the dictatorship of a Napoleon, of a Saint Louis, or a Charlemagne, but the dictatorship of *the first corporal who turns up, who brings you material order at the end of his sabre*, and whom you will all bless, and receive with enthusiasm, even you who interrupt me." Strange words of prophecy, in which the speaker

himself was far from seeing all the import and truth.

He goes on, however, to blame sadly the best men in France, and himself among the rest, for their share in the deplorable debasement and downfall of constitutional authority.

"We have all the same reproach to make to ourselves; we have all sympathised with aggressions directed against the power which was not in our hands or did not possess our sympathy. I do not hesitate to declare that this country can only be saved when men who are strangers to power, who are neither its possessors nor the supporters of its possessors, shall consent to defend it, to love and protect it with all the strength which civilisation and the constitution place in their hands. This is the sole condition of safety for society. Instead of that what have we seen? We have seen, under the late system, men newly deprived of power, and soon to wield it again, using the short interval between to weaken and discredit that power of which they had so long been, and were so soon again to become, the possessors. . . . And what is proved by this? That there is in our manner of entering public life, in our way of understanding the positions of the ruling power and of society,

something radically false and foolhardy—something incompatible not only with the interests of society, but even with the interests of Freedom, and with the duty incumbent upon us to preserve that freedom from the infallible ruin which attends her.

"After having thus judged all the world, permit me to judge myself also. . . . I too have been in opposition all my life, not systematic, but too often warm and exaggerated. My position, I venture to say, was very favourable for it, for I had neither personal animosities nor personal ambition. I was without hostile feelings, for no man had done me wrong or evil; and without ambition, for I never saw in myself, any more than I now see in myself, the capacity necessary for the exercise of power. However, I was in the opposition; my voice has too often swelled the rash and foolish clamour which rose from all quarters of Europe at once, and which finished by that explosion in which an attempt was made to overthrow all thrones, powers, and governments, not because they were oppressors, though some indeed were such; not because they had committed sins, though that was incontestable; but simply because they were powers, because they were governments, because they possessed authority—for no other reason!"

It required nothing less, he adds, than the abyss which opened under his feet on the 24th February, to show him where he was wrong. And this is how he does penance for it. He had learned in the mean time, and by ways which we will note at an after-period in the sketch we shall endeavour to give of his country life, what an extraordinary power the lower class of journals—"la mauvaise presse"—which played upon the ignorance and the passions of workmen and peasants, was attaining in the country. And with that courage of his opinions, to use one of the happiest of French expressions, which never deserted him, he ventured to support the restriction he thought necessary in the face of all his antecedents, defying the poor reproach of inconsistency. The kind of consistency which keeps a man faithful to the tradition of a certain line of conduct after it has ceased to be genuine or real to him, was not possible to Montalembert, as will be seen still more clearly as we go on.

In the autumn of this year, during the prorogation of the Assembly, Montalembert paid a visit to the constituencies which had elected him—to Brittany, which he did not accept, and to Franche Comté, which he did. His reception in both districts was cordial to enthusiasm, and from the two holiday speeches which he made

at Saint-Brieuc and at Besançon we are enabled to identify still more clearly his new position. At this moment, notwithstanding his fears, the sense that there were still righteous men enough in his country to save her, seems to have given a certain confidence to his mind. And the great cause of his life, the cause of free education, was all but won, which added exhilaration to his feelings. The words which follow, and which were addressed to the Breton electors at Saint-Brieuc, will show the reader his policy and the new position in which he believed himself to stand :—

"I have laboured for nearly twenty years to make a reconciliation between religion and liberty, which had been separated by a fatal misunderstanding. Now that this is happily and irrevocably consummated, I desire to dedicate myself to another reconciliation, to another union—to the union of men of honour and feeling (*hommes de cœur et d'honneur*) of all opinions in that one great honest moderate party which is the strength and safety of France. In all the ancient parties there are men capable of understanding each other, of appreciating each other, and of fighting side by side against the common enemy. We must regulate and discipline this union, of which the recent election in

the Côtes-du-Nord has been the expression, and the present Government the result. The Government, in harmony with the majority of the National Assembly, has constantly defended, and continues daily to defend, three great and holy things, . . . religion, property, and family rights. We are told that these are commonplaces. Do not believe it, gentlemen. They are only commonplaces when the foundations of social order cease to be threatened or undermined by minorities which are sometimes audacious and sometimes hypocritical. The Government which we have supported has rendered signal service to all three. To religion, by replacing the Sovereign Pontiff upon his throne, and by disengaging the French Republic from all connection with a republic of assassins. To property, by maintaining all acquired rights, by confirming the permanency of the magistracy, the guardian of laws and contracts—and by repealing all subversive innovations. And, finally, to the family, by that law on education which you will pardon my reference to, because it is the object of my constant solicitude, and because it is at present exposed to the injurious criticism of the discontented and exaggerated of all parties. I am neither its author nor its responsible promulgator, but I defend it because it offers the basis of an excellent compromise, of

an honourable peace for all. I have fought long, and more than any other, for this great cause; but I fought only with the hope of arriving at a worthy and fruitful peace, in which the right alone should have the victory, and in which no man should be humiliated."

The same point of view—less cheerful, but no whit less decided—appears in his address to the town of Besançon. There, after going over the same arguments already quoted, and again putting forth "Religion, Property, and Family" as "the three great laws of human society," he takes the motto of the city as his text, and comments upon it.

"'*Deo et Cesari fidelis perpetuo.*' At the first glance," he says, "the maintenance of this motto under the existing state of affairs seemed curious, and I asked myself, 'How do they manage to harmonise their Cæsar with the Republic?' But on reflecting, it is easy to perceive that Cæsar means no individual emperor, king, or president. No, Cæsar means authority, law, order, social power; in a word, Cæsar is society. When the Saviour of the world uttered these famous words, 'Render to Cæsar what is Cæsar's,' He did not speak only of the Emperor Tiberius, under whom He lived, but of authority

in general—of that necessary authority, of that respect for established laws and power, without which society is impossible, and liberty is nothing but a sanguinary chimera.

"Thus, then, *God and Society* is the true meaning of your device, and you have been faithful to it. God and Society! it is your motto—and I venture to say it is also mine. It is written on the banner which you have charged me to carry for you, and which I have planted in your name in the national tribune. I will maintain it there so long as my strength permits. I will never desert it; and the day when you withdraw your confidence from me, or the day when, worn out by a career already full of many struggles, I shall feel that the moment of retirement is come—that day I will replace this flag in your hands without reproach and without stain."

What strange tones of uncomprehended prophecy, what vague intimations of a future different in every particular from that to which he looked forward, breathe through these words! Before long that banner was to be torn out of the hands which carried it so proudly—before long that name of Cæsar was to bear other and bitter meanings; but in the mean time this is not the point which we have to consider. No doubt

passages could be found in Montalembert's early writings by any one so minded, which would seem to contradict the tenor of his present words. He was not careful of his consistency. He was alarmed and anxious for his country, and took little thought of himself. "God and liberty" had been the device of his youth, borne through many a hard-fought field and laborious day. When he wrote "God and Society" over it, he did so out of the fulness of his heart, without thinking whether or not his enemies might say he had contradicted himself. What did it matter what they said? It was France that was in question, and not the individual reputation of Charles de Montalembert.

There are some inconsistencies which are far nobler, truer, and more generous than an obstinate adherence to any tradition of personal faith or conduct; and this was one of them. Montalembert did not think twice of his personal traditions—he thought of his country. Nor was there any real alteration in his opinions. The liberty to which he had devoted himself from his youth was such a freedom as was consistent with the love of God and his neighbour, with all charity and consideration for the opinions of others, a liberty bound by laws of peace and order, honest, moderate, and manful, never wild,

licentious, and arrogant. To true liberty such unlimited licence is, as Montalembert well knew, the worst and most fatal enemy; and while in words he altered his device, in principle he changed nothing, but fought for his beloved freedom a more desperate fight than his younger days had ever known, when he wrote Society upon his shield, and became the champion of order, authority, and law. Whether he was right or whether he was mistaken is a different question. Man judges man too often by the results of his behaviour alone, but God and history judge him by his meaning, by his motives, by the lights he had, and the purpose which animated his life.

It is a more difficult question to clear up what were the reasons which induced Montalembert to advocate the candidature of Prince Louis Napoleon for the Presidency, and afterwards to defend and support him to a certain extent during its course. That he should have believed in the possibility of Napoleon's heir stopping short of a second Empire, seems strange to us with all the light of events to guide us —just as it would seem to us foolish and short-sighted to anticipate anything but a restored monarchy should one of the Orleans Princes attain real power in France. But it would seem that Montalembert's generous and knightly

soul took in this point its own chivalrous feeling rather than reason into council. In the mean time, his first public appearance after the Assembly resumed its sittings was in opposition to the President, who had, in his famous letter to Edgar Ney, required from the Pope on his return to Rome certain reforms in his secular government, which the supporters of the Papacy considered it an insult to the head of Christendom to demand from him. Pius IX. had proposed certain measures of his own by his *motu proprio*, and neither France nor any other country had, the religious party contended, a right to dictate to him. The question of the secular independence of the Pope bears a very different aspect in a Catholic country from what it does in our own; and we are perhaps, with our very different views, scarcely capable of fully understanding the combination of most unlikely brothers in arms which occurred whenever this question was discussed. M. Thiers, for instance, was on this occasion one of the first defenders of the Pope's sovereign authority; and Montalembert, when it came to his turn to speak, had his efforts crowned, even in the revolutionary Assembly, with one of those overwhelming successes which carry everything before them. It was another such day as the

day of his great Swiss speech in the Chamber of Peers; but how different was the audience which overwhelmed him with its applauses, and how different the manner in which he began his address! Victor Hugo, who had preceded him—the same Victor Hugo who in their youth had discoursed to Montalembert upon a renovated Europe, a great confederation under the Pope as head, and who had looked for the elevation and purification of society only through the Church—had spoken violently against the Pontifical Government, and Montalembert commenced his own speech by raising against himself the clamours of the Left, always ready enough of themselves to rise at his appearance. "Gentlemen, the speech you have just heard has received the punishment it deserved in the cheers with which it has been received," he said, with that accustomed coolness which never forsook him, and to which there are so many references in the pages of his contemporaries, bringing down upon himself a storm of *réclamations*. But notwithstanding this stormy beginning, and the constant interruptions with which his speech is broken, the power of the orator at length carries all before it. We will not refuse to the reader the one memorable passage of this speech, which is perhaps as well

known as the name of Montalembert itself; but before we proceed to that, let us quote another passage of eloquent indignation on the subject which had already called forth so many grand and pathetic lamentations from him. He had just been assailing the revolutionary party with the reproach that they had changed in men's minds the idea of liberty and shaken her power.

"You have dethroned some kings—but more surely still you have dethroned freedom. The kings have reascended their thrones, but Liberty has not reascended her throne—the throne which she had in our hearts. Oh! I know well that you write her name everywhere, in all the laws, on all the walls, upon all the cornices." (*Here the orator pointed to the roof of the Chamber.*) "But in hearts her name is effaced. Yes; the beautiful, the proud, the holy, the pure, and noble Liberty whom we so loved, so cherished, and so served,—yes! served before you did, more than you, better than you!—this Liberty is not dead, I hope, but she is languid, fainting, crushed, suffocated between that which some of you call the sovereignty of the aim—that is, the sovereignty of evil; and, on the other hand, that forced return towards the exaggeration of authority, which you have made a necessity for human

nature, for society, and for the human heart, terrified by your excesses."

This indignant apostrophe over, he turns to his real subject—to the history of Pius IX., to his attempt at liberalism, to the assassination of his minister, and all the evils that followed; and to the fatal failure of all attempts to constrain religion (as embodied in the person of the Pope), which previous monarchs had discovered to their cost. In such a conflict failure is certain, he says:—

"And why is failure certain? Ah! remark this well—because there is inequality of forces between the Holy See and you, or whoever struggles against it. And understand that this inequality is not in your favour, but against you. You have 300,000 men, fleets, artillery, all the resources that material force can furnish, it is true. And the Pope has nothing of all this; but he has, what you do not possess, moral force—an empire over souls and consciences to which you can make no pretensions, and this empire is immortal.

"You deny it; you deny this moral force, you deny the faith, you deny the empire of the pontifical authority over souls—that empire which has subdued the proudest emperors; but

there is one thing which you cannot deny, and that is the weakness of the Holy See. It is this weakness, understand, that gives it an insurmountable strength against you. There is not in the history of the world a sight more wonderful or more consolatory than the embarrassment of strength in conflict with weakness.

"Permit me a familiar comparison. When a man is condemned to struggle with a woman, if that woman is not the most degraded of beings, she may defy him with impunity. She says to him, Strike! but you will disgrace yourself, and you will not overcome me. The Church is not a woman; she is more than a woman, she is a mother. She is a mother—the mother of Europe, of modern society, of modern humanity. And though a son may be unnatural, rebellious, ungrateful, it is in vain for him to struggle—he is still a son; and there comes a moment in every struggle with the Church when this parricidal war becomes insupportable to the race, and when he who has maintained it falls overpowered, annihilated, either by defeat, or by the unanimous reprobation of humanity!"

When the speaker came to the climax we have just recorded — when he proclaimed to the agitated Assembly, *L'église c'est une*

mère ! the conflicting cries with which the previous parts of his address had been received swelled together in one huge shout of applause and emotion. "A triple salvo of cheers greeted this phrase of the orator," says the calm report of the 'Moniteur,' for once roused into something like enthusiasm. "This speech," adds the 'Débats,' at no time a lover of Montalembert, or disposed to do him more than justice, "was followed by such cheers as no one remembers to have heard in any deliberative assembly." Other speakers attempted to follow; but with such words echoing in their ears, who could stop to listen to the dull ordinary voices of a Parliamentary debate? The proposal before the House, which had reference to the expenses of the Roman expedition, was voted by 467 voices to 168. The triumph was incontestable, and once more Montalembert, so little used to success, had secured a political victory.

This victory was sweet to his heart, more sweet than any simply political victory could have been. He records it in his journal with a thrill of gratified emotion. The Right applauded him with such enthusiasm as to make their cheers, he says, "resemble an act of faith." It was "the finest moment of his life." Other moments had been so distinguished in

his youth, as the reader will remember, but we believe this is the first and last time that he made use of the expression in his maturer years. The attitude of the Assembly was like a solemn adhesion to the Church, he adds. One man said to him that his impulse had been to go at once to confession. Thiers, his old opponent, whose good opinion was worth having, said of him, "He is the most eloquent of men, and his speech the finest I have ever heard. I envy him for it, but I hope the envy is no sin; for I love the beautiful, and I love Montalembert." Berryer addressed him in the words we have already quoted, "Your strength lies in this, that you are not absolute, but resolute." On the other hand, one of the newspapers, 'La Liberté,' denounced him as a viper under the altar. "The passage concerning the Church," says Sainte Beuve, "that pathetic impersonation, even for those who regard it only from a distance, and from an artistic point of view, must remain one of the happiest inspirations of eloquence."

His next speech was upon a very different subject—on a question of indirect taxation, the tax upon wine and other intoxicating drinks, which had been repealed, re-enacted, and repealed again, by the Republican Assembly dur-

ing its brief existence. Montalembert strongly supported the imposition of taxes of this description, which fell more or less upon the whole community, instead of the more arbitrary direct taxes, falling only upon the richer classes, which a Parliament more or less under the control of the ignorant masses was always subject to be driven to as its safest expedient. He made something like a half apology for taking up a question so far out of his usual range. "In times of peace," he says, "each man is free to choose that portion of the social rampart which it suits him best to defend or to strengthen; but when the entire rampart is threatened, attacked, and shaken, the good soldier rushes to the breach wherever it may be, and there spends himself, his devotedness, his courage, and his life." The question thus taken up did not suffer in his hands. He elevated it from a mere discussion of statistics, of profit to the revenue, and effect upon public consumption, to a higher inquiry into great principles, into the theory of taxation, and its place among the powers and necessities of civilisation. The proposal which he defended and elevated was accepted by a large majority. It confirmed him, we are told, in the rank of masters of eloquence, "maîtres de la parole." His

friends from all quarters wrote to congratulate him. The President of the Republic received him well, and gave an attentive ear to all he said. Personal success, and success in his dearest projects — for the Law of Public Instruction was just about to be settled according to his wishes—filled his mind, and the atmosphere which surrounded him, with satisfaction and brightness. What wonder if other events took a glow of hope and promise from this golden haze of personal victory? What wonder that for the moment he believed in the good intentions of the power which aided him, and the improving prospects of his country? Had he been unsusceptible to these influences he would have been more than man.

The final discussion of his favourite subject —the long pursuit of his life—commenced in January 1850. The commission which had prepared this law included the names of Thiers and Cousin, both of whom had opposed Montalembert's repeated attacks upon the monopoly of the University, during the reign of Louis Philippe, with all their powers. Several other members of the "Ancien Conseil Royal de l'Université" also united in this compromise. All features of hostility against the University were thus taken from it. It had become, as Monta-

lembert had said in the words we have just quoted of his speech at Saint-Brieuc, "a victory of right alone, and a humiliation to no man." The sittings of the commission were of themselves debates, and these of a high character; and the *projet de loi* was professedly the result of a combination and coalition of men starting from entirely different stand-points, and agreeing only in the desire to settle a long-vexed question, and to make a visible effort to consolidate the moderate party—the true lovers of constitutionalism and lawful liberty. The rights secured by the new measure were of the greatest importance to the community, and especially to the religious part of it. The licence necessary to every individual who meant to open a school was abolished, and also the certificate of study at an authorised school required from the candidates for the *baccalauréat* examination. The religious seminaries were thrown open, and the religious orders were freed from the prohibition to teach, with which all had been alike bound, so far as the higher branches of instruction were concerned. An academy was created in each department in the place of the one reigning University, and delegates from the local clergy, the local officials, and the *conseils généraux* were appointed to aid the local rector

and inspectors in general supervision of the new system. This local academical committee was the only creation of the Act; all its other particulars were the removal of restrictions. From June 1849 until January 1850, this projected law had been discussed in the bureaux; and only at the latter date, when its originator, M. de Falloux, had ceased to be Minister of Public Instruction, was his measure finally submitted to Parliament. The discussion was hot, and agitated, as usual, by innumerable interruptions. Montalembert's appearance was hailed eagerly by friends and foes—the former to support him in a new position, the latter on the watch to throw his old principles in his teeth, and, if possible, catch him in a self-contradiction. In this hope, however, they were disappointed. "I have fought against official teaching for twenty years," he said; "and now for a year past I have been negotiating with the ancient champions of that teaching a treaty of peace, which is now submitted to your ratification. I require to justify before you both the struggle and the peace." He then proceeded to make this justification in full detail, entering into the old system with all its cruelties and defects, and the fatal effect which he believed it to have produced. "Do you know what was the result?" he cries. "It was this: that,

without intending it, they gave to the people Socialism instead of religion. Some sort of religion is necessary to the people; you all acknowledge this. When their old religion had been taken away—when an end had been made of their faith in the God made Man of the Gospel—do you know what was substituted? The faith in man made God of Socialism. For what is Socialism at bottom? It is man believing himself God, in the sense that he believes himself capable of destroying evil and suffering."

He then proceeded to discuss the new law, avowing that it did not grant entire freedom, such as existed in Belgium and in England, and such as he had claimed in other days. It was freedom under conditions; but these conditions were such, that had they been offered under the former reign they would have been gladly accepted; and the law was sufficient to secure the benefits of freedom to teaching in general, and to Catholic teaching in particular.

"After the passing of this law," he adds, "freedom will not be wanting to Catholics; if there is any failure, it will be Catholics who are wanting to freedom." He then recapitulates the labours he has recently undergone, and the bitter result which this anticipated victory had already brought upon him.

"We have laboured for a year—we and our old adversaries; we entered into this labour with a recollection of our ancient struggles, but we have not cherished that recollection except to encourage us to surmount the fatigues, the difficulties, contradictions, and bitternesses, inseparable from such a work. We have sacrificed none of our old affections or convictions, but we have added to them a conviction of the necessity of union in the presence of a common enemy, and an ardent and sincere affection for the peace of society which is so constantly threatened. We have sacrificed neither truth nor justice; all that we have sacrificed has been the spirit of contention, bitterness, and exaggeration, which are unhappily inseparable from even the most legitimate struggles, when they are prolonged too far. . . .

"And this part which I have assumed, this union which I have concluded, this labour in common with my old enemies, has procured me —permit me to relieve my mind by saying so —the greatest trial of my political life. I have seen the army which I had, I venture to say, brought into being during the struggles of the last twenty years, dissolving around me. I have seen the men whom I had guided and led in the struggle for twenty years turn

against me. I have seen them turn against me at the moment when I believed the struggle was about to end. I have seen them drop, as they say in their newspapers, tears over what they call my suicide. . . . I do not censure here the intentions of the men of whom I speak. I accept, on the contrary, this trial—the greatest of my political life; I accept it, and in this way: I know not if I ever misunderstood in other days the intentions of my adversaries. I do not think I have ever done so. . . . But if it may have happened to me unawares to misinterpret the laws of justice in respect to my former enemies, I now expiate that fault—I know henceforward what it is to be misunderstood not only by adversaries but by friends. If, however, I have, as I believe, nothing to expiate in this respect, I accept, notwithstanding, the trial, as a last homage and a last service to the cause of the Church's liberty. I have given to that cause my life, my courage, twenty years of perseverance and self-devotion. I offer to her now, as a last homage, the ingratitude, unpopularity, and injustice which this law has procured for me in the midst of my own party."

This bitter and pathetic complaint was drawn from him by the opposition of the extreme

Catholic party under the leadership of M. Louis Veuillot and his newspaper the 'Univers.' After the crisis of 1848, when Montalembert had been urged to accept the management of this paper, the 'Univers' had gradually drifted into the position and character it has since borne; but it was only when this educational law was finally settled that it showed itself fully. It had become the representative of the narrow clerical party which saw nothing in the world but an extended Church, ruled by privilege and prerogative, and pervaded by the close and small atmosphere which is common to every coterie of whatsoever description. It had been Montalembert's aim to establish religion and his beloved Church in the free air, in the full daylight—"plein jour, grand air," as say the French, with a certain fulness of respiration in the very words. But sectarianism is dear to the narrow religionist, and M. Veuillot must have inevitably suited many of Montalembert's clients better than the greater man. They seized this first opportunity of revolt with a certain pitiful eagerness. The 'Univers' denounced the new law with all its might and main. It was "a symptom of the detestable character of the times in which we live." "Never," it said, "had the disorder, the

impossibility of agreement, the decay of doctrine, the disgust of fighting for the truth, the weakening of all hope in the triumph of truth and justice, shown themselves more sadly. Catholics themselves have afforded this spectacle. They have in their turn extended the divisions by which all parties weaken themselves—formed those alliances in which all parties debase themselves—made conversions—had recourse to subterfuges; and even made those renunciations which in our opinion, and under every flag, betray the secret failure of reason and of feeling." "The Catholic party has lost its chiefs," the same journal added; and it accused them of "denying their principles and convictions of former times, and uniting themselves to men like M. Thiers in *order to prevent* liberty of teaching from becoming the law."

Such was the way in which his own party acknowledged Montalembert's acceptance of the practicable and possible in place of the theoretical and absolute. It was "the greatest trial of his political life." On the other hand, the revolutionary press, and the revolutionary minority in the Chamber, rushed upon him open-mouthed, to taunt him with the same sacrifice of principles and consistency. This attempt was indeed

somewhat of a failure, and not one which could harm the object of the attack; and perhaps the taunts of his old enemies were a relief and agreeable stimulant after the abuse of his friends. M. Jules Favre, so well known of late days, was the leader of the assault against him; and the chief point of his accusation was that Montalembert had said in 1844, "Nous sommes les fils des Croisés, et jamais nous ne donnerons la main aux fils de Voltaire." We trust we do not need to point out to the reader the mistake, completely neutralising the accusation, of this quotation. "Nous ne reculerons jamais" was the phrase of Montalembert. This petty but hot attack was therefore disposed of easily enough; and the substantial satisfaction of seeing the law at last enacted, and a very sufficient measure of reasonable freedom accorded, repaid Montalembert for his long struggle, and for the desertion of his followers. He was thus left victorious, yet defeated, upon the ground he had so long and so gallantly held. The victory was won, but the leader was left alone upon the field of battle. Curiously significant, like the dramatic winding up of a tragedy, was this strange success. He won it—but in winning it, came not only to the end of his campaign, but to an end of his power; he had succeeded

in the object which he had pursued for twenty years; but his political position was gone, and his power over. Never was there a more singular situation. In conquering he fell.

And perhaps, though he does not say so —though, indeed, he says the contrary, and generously leads the combat for the measure which he did not originate—there may have been a certain mortification to Montalembert in the fact that the law which put an end to the long agitation in which so much of his life had been spent did not bear his name. It is the *loi Falloux*, not the *loi Montalembert*—though M. de Falloux, worthy and excellent man as he was, had not spent hours for the years given by his friend and colleague to this cause. One man soweth and another reapeth. It would be difficult to find a more distinct manifestation of that universal law.

After listening to all the tumults produced on one side and the other by this tardy and still imperfect triumph of justice, it moves the writer, as it will also, we have no doubt, move the reader, half to amusement, half to indignation, to find how bitterly the English newspapers of the day lamented the delivering over of France into the hands of the clergy for education, which was to be brought about by a

law not half so favourable to the clergy, or any other objectionable teachers, as were the laws under which England has lived tranquilly for ages. He who was accused by his late friends of abandoning his principles, and by his enemies of contradicting himself—by both of accepting a compromise—was assailed next door, if we may use the expression, as the representative of bigotry and intolerance, the Inquisition, the Jesuits, the black army of locusts who were about to overrun France—and all the traditionary horrors of Papist aggression! So far as we are aware, he stood very steadily under these assaults; but the desertion of his former followers went to his very heart.

This is not the conclusion of Montalembert's political career; but it is the conclusion, and a strange one, of its most brilliant chapter, and of the long struggle which had extended through all his life. We may pause to take breath at this point; and there is perhaps no better opportunity of affording the reader a glimpse of the contemporary portraits of Montalembert's personal appearance and manner of oratory, which the critics of French political assemblies are fond of indulging in. Here is a lively sketch, given by M. de Cormenin, in a work entitled 'Livre des Orateurs,' of the manner in which his speeches

were listened to, which affords us at the same time a most curious picture of a French Assembly :—

"Behind him the President rings his bell; by his side the crier proclaims, 'Silence, messieurs!' before him his adversaries of the Right and Left Centre strike upon their desks with wooden knives, stamp under the tables, talk, whistle, grumble, murmur, exclaim, and interrupt.

"One man close by him draws a *silhouette* of his foe, allowing him to perceive the profile.

"Another imitates his voice.

"Another repeats his words, contemptuously changing the sense.

"Some interrupt in order to confuse him in the midst of a syllogism.

"Some make themselves rigid against his demonstrations and his eloquence, predetermined not to allow themselves either to be moved or convinced by him.

"Some threaten him with their fists.

"Some reply to him with abuse if he utters a valuable truth; and his friends interrupt him almost as much by their cheers."

Another description is given us by the Abbé Dourlens :—

"M. de Montalembert's action is the external

reflection of his eloquence. His gestures are sober, but easy, noble, dignified, and aristocratic.

"His head, slightly thrown back, gives to his attitude an aspect of provocation (*un ton provocateur*).

"A perpetual smile trembles upon his lips, and, changing from moment to moment, becomes by turns benevolent, disdainful, and satirical.

"His eyes, which are large and melancholy, show, in succession, with glances of energy, all the different sentiments which he expresses."

We will add to these the more graceful description of M. Sainte-Beuve :—

"He is always perfectly at his ease.

"He has few gestures, but he possesses the most essential qualities which produce successful action. His voice, pure and enduring (*d'une longue haleine*), is distinct and clear in tone, with a vibration and accent very suitable to mark the generous or ironical meaning of his speeches. The son of an English mother, he has in his voice, through its sweetness, a certain rise and fall of accentuation which answers his purpose well, which lets certain words drop from a greater height and resound further than others. I ask pardon for insisting upon these particulars; but the ancients, our masters in everything, and

particularly in eloquence, gave a minute attention to them; and a great modern orator has said, 'A man has always the voice of his mind.' A mind clear, distinct, firm, generous, a little disdainful, displays all these sentiments in its voice."

Does the reader then see this man, of moderate height, with his head slightly thrown back, his erect firm figure, his blue eyes always clear and somewhat cold in repose, but waking and warming up with every flash of feeling, his clear-cut features, with a certain curl of incipient sarcasm about the lips, confronting that tumultuous assembly, sometimes subduing it, always holding his own—ever cool, quiet, immovable, with few gestures, and always perfectly at his ease, unexcitable amid all the excitement, his voice cutting like clear steel through all the tumults of the place? "These new assemblies, so differently composed and so stormy, suited him marvellously," says Sainte-Beuve. "He did not fear interruptions, but liked them; he found in them *great honour*, he said, and *great pleasure*." Calm as an Englishman he stood in their midst, and held his own whatever happened. Such was his appearance during this brilliant year—the most brilliant of his life.

CHAPTER XV.

THE END OF PUBLIC LIFE.

We have said this was not the conclusion of Montalembert's political career: and it is true. Yet in a sense this was its real conclusion. During the ensuing year he made some brilliant speeches in Parliament, and uttered one brief address to his country, which it would perhaps have been better had he not uttered; but his position was changed, and his career to a certain extent over. For one thing, he had accomplished the work which had been his aim all his life. A certain sense of completion and of ending is in every great political victory. When the cause is won at last, which a man has spent twenty years fighting for, the position is a very trying one for a political leader—and perhaps more fruitless and unnecessary agitation has been produced by this fact than by any other means; for political leaders are but mortal, and

it is hard for a man to allow that his occupation is gone, and that the ended grievance makes, so to speak, an end of him. Whether Montalembert would have been wise enough to perceive this, and to turn his energies to other things, he had no time to prove; for his position had been changed involuntarily by external influences as well as by the stoppage of success. A man who is independent and original in mind, whose ways of thinking are not as other men's, and who continually interferes with impracticable and high-flown theories of right and wrong, when ordinary politicians are managing their jobs and routine of business in the most strictly human and faulty and unheroic way, is always an embarrassment to men who are busy with the machinery of government. He who is not to be moved by comprehensible party motives, or by interest, or by the hope of succeeding to power, or, in short, by any well-understood human sentiment, but only by some absurd ideal of what is right, is a troublesome member even of the freest of Parliaments. There are circumstances under which Parliaments and Governments are compelled to listen to such a man. Great eloquence is of course one of these circumstances, and so is the weight of a high character, both of which Montalembert continued to possess;

but he attains real weight most certainly when he has "a strong back"—when he is the representative and leader of a compact and influential party, even though that party be but a small one. Montalembert had possessed till now this crowning claim to consideration. He had been known to have a certain *clientèle* always behind him, prompt to obey and support him, moving like one man under his all but supreme sway. Now all at once this following failed him. He ceased to be the Catholic party — the religious party in essence; he became plain Charles de Montalembert — Citoyen de Montalembert, as the folly of the period entitled him—a man with such a voice as few possessed, but with only one vote—as much and no more than any Dupont or Dupin in the Assembly. This changed his position in the most curious way. A great leader, but without a party; a famous general, but without soldiers; he stood alone between the parties, an individual, no longer an army in himself.

Men do not come to the full sense of this change all at once; and though Montalembert had been the first to declare it, it is most probable that it was but by degrees that the cold practical proofs of desertion succeed-

ed in discouraging his mind, and taking the force out of his political action. And, indeed, for another year the great impetus with which he had thrown himself into public work after 1848, continued, and carried him on, as a boat goes on by mere force of "way." Though he had no actual place in the Government, he had become almost part of several successive Ministries—a man to be relied upon when any great effort was to be made. He was a foremost member of the "commissions" and "bureaux," which are, in French political life, something like what Parliamentary committees are among ourselves, though with characteristic differences; and several times appears as "M. le Rapporteur," presenting the *projet de loi*, prepared by a commission, to the Assembly—an office which is, we think, unknown in England, where all laws are discussed first, as well as last, by "the whole House." Thus in May 1850 he was a member of the commission chosen to consider and report upon a modification of the law of universal suffrage, of which the moderate majority of the Assembly had begun to be afraid. The alteration was in reality a change from Universal Suffrage to Household Suffrage, and naturally made a great commotion in the Chamber. It

stipulated that all electors should be able to prove that they had resided in one place for three years before they could secure the right to vote. The very nomination of this commission drove the democratic party wild, and one of their papers asked, "Ces vieillards entêtés," whether they had reflected what they were doing? or considered that they thus forfeited their heads to the infernal gods of the Revolution? Their names (they were seventeen in number) were published, framed in black, at the head of all the democratic journals. In this case Montalembert did not occupy the position of "Rapporteur," but he entered warmly into the discussion, defending with all his might the proposed law, for which he was partly responsible. As usual, his speech contained some expressions which became for a time proverbial, and were twisted out of their natural sense and used against him on after occasions. After pointing out the immense progress towards Socialism which had been made since the day when Proudhon, "its most logical, most energetic, and, I believe, most loyal organ," brought forward his programme before the Assembly, he asks his colleagues whether nothing is to be done to suppress this dangerous tide which threatens to submerge society.

"It is necessary," he says, "to make war upon this evil which increases daily—such war as is permitted by the Constitution—by all the means sanctioned by justice, honour, and the laws which govern us. To express my thoughts in one word, I will say that we must recommence the expedition of Rome within ourselves; that we must undertake a campaign against Socialism, which threatens and devours us, like the expedition of Rome."

The speaker was interrupted by tumults and outcries. "The Saint Bartholomew!" cried the Left, whose temper was infinitely more disposed for such arguments as that of the Saint Bartholomew than was the man whom they thus assailed. When the clamour had subsided he went on:—

"As the expedition of Rome was undertaken against a republic which attempted to unite itself with the French Republic, a serious war must be undertaken against the Socialism which attempts to make itself one with the Republic and the Constitution. . . . The situation is absolutely the same. In respect to the Roman republic there were but three positions to take—neutrality, complicity, or hostility. Neutrality would have been abdication; it would have been as much as to say that the Republic had

slain France politically in preventing her from taking a part in the greatest interests of the outside world. Complicity would have been shame; it would have rendered France responsible for a Republic begun by assassination and founded upon sacrilege. Hostility—war! was the right and the duty of France. . . . You are now in the same situation in respect to Socialism. Neutrality—oh, neutrality! it is death. There is nothing more remaining to you in that case but to make your will: or rather, do not take the trouble, for you may be sure that your heir will tear it up. After neutrality you have complicity; that is shame, and will not preserve you from death, for Socialism may take you for dupes and instruments, but never for associates. I hope as much, at least, for your sake. There remains to you only one resource—war made loyally, frankly, energetically; legal war, by all the means which justice does not reprove and which the Constitution permits."

After so very clear an explanation of his meaning, the reader will not know whether to smile or wonder when he hears that not only in agitated France, among all the convulsions of party strife, but in the calm commentaries of the leading journals of England this "expedi-

tion de Rome à l'interieur" was taken up as meaning some Jesuit crusade intended to enslave France over again, some religious conspiracy by which Rome should march to the interior, binding the minds of the people in her chains, and doing what dirty work a temporal oppressor might allot to her by the way! So little justice is there in political strife, and so completely ignorant was the world in which he had struggled for twenty years, always in the interests of freedom and honour, of the man with whom they had to do. His share in the expedition of Rome was exactly what was inevitable to his position, and no more. From his very grave so good a Catholic would cry out against us did we endeavour to lessen his responsibility in that enterprise; but the fact is that he did not originate it, that he did no more than support it. His great speech upon Rome, which electrified his audience, came after that event—after the restoration of the Pope to his throne. The audacious expedient of seizing a phrase and separating it from the context in order to give it a meaning utterly at variance with the express words of the speaker, is, however, a very old and popular mode of criticism, and not by any means confined to the enemies of Montalembert.

The speech we have just quoted was concluded by an indignant reply to the threat of the Socialist papers, also cited above.

"Gentlemen, one last word—a word which is personal to myself and to my sixteen colleagues. We have been told in a democratic journal, the most widely circulated of all—and the assertion has not been disavowed by any of its brethren—that our heads are devoted to the infernal gods of the Revolution. The meaning of this is plain. The history of our ancestors exists to teach us what it means, to show which are the infernal gods of the Revolution. It is a choice between the scaffold of the Terror and that democratic dagger which struck M. Rossi. These are the infernal gods of the Revolution.

"Well! I accept that fate, and I prefer it. I prefer it a thousand times to the crushing infamy and contempt with which posterity will overwhelm those whom France had charged to save her, and who have delivered her up—who have, I say, victims of an unexampled and inexcusable cowardice, delivered up their dishonoured country, the society which they have betrayed, and France which they have sacrificed, to the slavery, shame, and barbarism which you are preparing for her!"

This exordium was followed by a scene of great excitement. The calm 'Moniteur' chronicles the "Bravos et applaudissements prolongés" in a business-like way. "A great number of representatives came to congratulate the orator in his place," it adds. "The sitting was suspended for several minutes." The change of law thus advocated, and known by the name of the Law of the 31st May, was carried by a considerable majority, and once more Montalembert found himself on the side of success. This was the law which the President abolished arbitrarily six months later. It was one of the last efforts made by the loyal moderate party to save France from the dangerous descent down which she had already begun to glide.

A little later we find Montalembert, in a semi-official capacity, proposing the prorogation of the Assembly after a sitting of *ten months and a half!* a proposal which was carried not without opposition. During the moment of repose thus gained he went to Rome. We may say here that the desertion of the Catholic party in France does not seem in any way to have lessened his favour with the head of the Church. "We have even been denounced at Rome," he had said, mournfully, in his great speech on education. But Rome, it is evident,

had not accepted the denunciation; and he was received with the honour due to such a champion of the faith. He was presented with the diploma of a Roman citizen—a rare honour, seldom granted—and with a gold medal, struck in honour of his visit. In the letter of thanks which he addressed to Prince Odescalchi, the head of the municipality, on this occasion, there is little that is remarkable, except the testimony he bears to the chief of the Government in France, with whom he was so soon to be in deadly conflict. Taking it for granted that the honour thus done to him was to reward his efforts to save the Pontifical throne, he enumerated his colleagues in this work as follows:—

"Justice obliges me to reserve to myself but a very slender part in your gratitude. There are others who deserve it better than I do. It is to the persevering prudence of M. de Falloux and his colleagues in the Ministry — to M. Thiers, whose eloquent and courageous report threw so much light on the question—to the energetically resolute majority in the Legislative Assembly—to the President of the Republic, *faithful and loyal interpreter of the wishes of the country,*—in a word, it is to the union

of the great party of order in France that Rome owes the happiness of once more seeing the Sovereign Pontiff in full possession of his freedom and of his authority."

These are strange words, but still stranger were to come. One of the very first questions which came before the Assembly, when it met again, was the income of the President, *La Dotation Presidentielle.* Montalembert spoke but on one subject before this, and that was a subject completely in accordance with his faith and character, but scarcely well timed at the moment, or perhaps at any moment, until French manners have undergone a great change. He was appointed *rapporteur*, or, as we should say, secretary of the committee charged to examine into the observance, or rather the non-observance, of Sundays, and to frame a law thereupon. The report which he read on this subject contains many of the arguments familiar to us, though treated in a way much unlike our mode of treating them. The importance of the Sunday rest in the economy of human life, and its special importance to the poor, are very fully and strikingly set forth, but the law proposed is specially described as "avoiding all that could resemble the Pharisaism of certain forms of Sunday observance in England and Scotland, or

that Puritanism which forbids all amusement, even intellectual, as well as all work, and which believes that God can be honoured by immovability and weariness." In fact, not even theatres were condemned by this gentle form of Sabbath-keeping, and the only enactment really attempted was one putting a stop to public works on Sunday, and to other ordinary labour, with, however, many special exceptions. "Renvoyé à Charenton!" cried one member of the Left, when the bill was read for the first time; and it is easy to imagine how a profane Republic, with no religion, and not much respect for that of others, might have thought the man a lunatic who proposed to shut the shops in Paris every Sunday, and suspend its work. This proposal, however, never even came under discussion, being interrupted by other pressing subjects. The dotation of the President was then the first great question on which Montalembert spoke after the reassembling of the Chamber; and it was his last important appearance there. In this debate he appeared as the warm advocate and champion of Louis Napoleon; and curiously enough, thanks to the man whom he thus defended, his voice was scarcely ever heard in that Assembly again. If Montalembert was wrong in this most disinterested championship, his error was most speedily and deeply punished.

It may be necessary here to set the changing position of affairs again in a very few words before the reader, in order to make the changes in Montalembert's position quite plain. In the Assembly, as at first constituted, there had been a majority of moderate men, anxious above all things to serve the country, and willing to accept the forms of doing so which might be most agreeable to that country. These men had supplied more than one Ministry, who had anxiously set themselves to work with the President, and to establish between him and themselves a system of mutual aid against the dangers of anarchy and revolution; and though one or two minor difficulties had arisen, they had been overcome. But now the time fixed for the end of the presidential office was approaching; and all the political passions, which for a little while had been kept in check, began to boil up anew. Louis Napoleon, to a large number of people in France, was like a port into which the ship of the State had been thrust, and had found safety. Now it was nearly time for her to set off again on her terrible voyage—to rush on, pilotless, till the next reef or the next whirlpool should get her, tearing her in pieces, or dashing her into the bitterest depths. As the crisis approached, the agitation of pas-

sion seized one part of the public, the agitation of fear the other. The soberer views of the Assembly changed; the troublous elements began to come uppermost, and one or two secondary differences grew soon into a settled and increasing separation. The majority ceased to be moderate, and the President began to perceive the chances before him. The Constitutional party, if we may so entitle it, found itself paralysed between its dread of Socialism and its distrust of Prince Louis; the party of Revolution looked forward to the saturnalia of change in which it delighted, and which was again approaching; and everything pointed to a great crisis. One Ministry after another was proved unable to hold its balance between the contending elements of anarchy and individual power. The constitutional expedient of change of Ministry is one which can succeed only in a well-regulated country, where the Opposition is as lawful and as loyal as the Government; where it is used as a mere charm, it is a charm which soon loses its effect; and it very soon became apparent that this was no affair of changing Ministers, but a death-struggle between the legislative and the executive powers; a struggle to be won, not by right or by argument, but by the strong hand. It was, then, during this

last struggle that Montalembert mounted the tribune for the last time. He had ceased to believe in the power of any revolutionary Ministry; and it had for some time been his conscientious determination to support at all hazards, that authority, still lawful, whose possessor, he thought, had up to this moment fulfilled his bargain with the country and done his duty. We have said in a former chapter that we were not in a position to say what was the attraction which Montalembert found in the future Emperor—but we were wrong. There is a *naïve* sketch by his own hand in this speech, of the manner in which he was attracted towards that extraordinary adventurer. We cannot do better than give it in his own words. After saying that he could not take it upon him to answer either for the future or the past of his hero, and that it was without enthusiasm, and with no unlimited confidence, that he came to plead his cause, he gives the following account of the commencement of his interest in him :—

"Do you know on what day his past commences for me ? It was on the day when, despite of M. de Lamartine and the Government of the period, he was elected a representative, and entered this Chamber, to be exposed for two

entire months to the abuse of the Left, to find himself harassed and insulted, I do not hesitate to say it—for two months—by the 'Mountain' of that time. . . .

"Permit me to insist upon the point, since you have called me upon this ground. Yes, it is from that day that I, who knew nothing of him, who had not the slightest connection with his family—it is from this moment that I began to take an interest in him. . . . I said to myself—Since he is thus attacked, and by such enemies, there must be something good about him. Upon this, I interested myself for his candidature. I inquired into the guarantees which he could offer to my religious and political convictions, and I was satisfied. I do not pretend the least in the world to have contributed to his election otherwise than by my vote; but I applauded that election, and I come here to-day to declare that he has done much more than he promised—a fact very different from the conduct of most princes and powers of this world, who promise much more than they perform."

Thus, with a curious return to the sentiment of his youth, Montalembert himself indicates to us unconsciously the simplicity which mingled with all the depth and force of his

own nature, the power of feeling over him more strong than that of reason, and his invincible tendency to range himself on the side of those who seemed to him ill-used and unjustly treated. Once more the youth who hated victorious causes looks at us, as it were, over the shoulder of the mature man who ought to have known better, yet who endears himself individually to us by never knowing any better—by being as open to every generous emotion, as ready to be deceived as ever, in the truth and openness of his own soul. Thiers, old statesman and man of the world, moved by other feelings, saw more clearly. "L'empire est fait," he had said, when he heard of the election of the 10th December; but to Montalembert's more generous, more believing mind, such cynical disbelief of all good motives and confidence in all evil ones was impossible. He even held up, in his wonderful simplicity—a thing to bring the tears to one's eyes—this very saying of Thiers, admitting the truth of it; doing more—admitting that the mass of the peasants who voted for Louis Napoleon believed they were voting for an emperor; and then called upon France and the world to see how wrong was the meaner interpretation of this man's motives, and how just his own generous belief in his truth and virtue. "Has he responded to

that idea? Has he shown the least appearance of yielding to those imperial sympathies which I point out to you as a historical fact?" cries the generous advocate. "No; he came here loyally, honourably, instantly, to this tribune, to take to the Constitution and to the Republic an oath which he has never broken."

After all that has passed between this and then, after all the sad enlightenment which events poured upon the eyes of the world so soon, these impassioned words of defence read like folly. And they were folly; but a folly which is half divine—the trust of a true man in the word and honour of his fellow, the unconquerable faith of a chivalrous soul in the sway of lofty motives, truth, and nobleness, rather than in mean motives, selfishness, lust of power, and disregard of honour. The man who thus believes may be betrayed, and may be made even to betray himself to issues he never dreamed of; but his wrong is founded on the highest right, and is nobler than wisdom in its lofty foolishness. This was the folly, the delusion, the mistake of Montalembert. Who will throw the first stone at him, standing up in his simplicity, facing the tumultuous Assembly, defending the man who was to silence it, to silence him, to condemn him to impotence in the middle of his

days, to close his eloquent lips, and send him dumb and sad back among the long list of silenced men who have had to stand aside and see their country dragged into misery and ruin? Could he have seen but three months in advance, how differently might he have spoken! but none of us can see three months in advance; and to so true a man it was impossible to believe, as the cynic can, in the fundamental untruthfulness of others. "I am not here," he went on, "as the guarantee, or the friend, or the counsellor, or the advocate of the President of the Republic; I am simply his witness; and I come here to bear my testimony before the tribunal of the country that he has done nothing unworthy of that great cause of order which we have all wished to serve. . . . The President of the Republic, in my opinion, has remained faithful to the mission which was confided to him."

This speech was made on the 10th of February 1851. The reader is aware how everything was overturned in France before the end of the year. Montalembert, as we have said, never made any important speech in the Assembly again. He spoke in its bureaux, doing what he could to work behind-backs, where quiet and some sort of progress were still possible, but in the ever wilder and ruder

arena of the Chamber itself he appeared no more. When the moment of the last struggle came, he was one of sixty-three representatives who signed a protest against the dissolution and dispersion of the Assembly; but even then he did not give up the Prince-President. The crisis was a terrible one, and many others besides Montalembert saw nothing but Louis Napoleon between them and a sanguinary struggle with that Red Republic which threatened society and the very existence of the nation. The President had still a charm which could still the agitated people until perhaps better days and better counsels might come. To stand by him might be dangerous, but to forsake him would be fatal. Such was the feeling with which Montalembert entered into that doubtful and dark moment which elapsed between the *coup d'état* and the distinct revelation of Napoleon's intentions. He stood by uncertain, watching eagerly, hoping against hope that good might still come. If we must allow that of all his colleagues he was almost alone in this hope, as he had been very nearly alone in his high and generous interpretation of the President's motives, this was not a fact to discourage him. He had stood alone before for many a day and through many a struggle. He was true to his own prin-

ciples in that interval of darkness. To support, whether it was agreeable to him or not, the authority which alone could preserve order in the country, had been the chief point of his teaching since '48, and through all the difficulties and discouragements of the time he adhered to it now.

The history of the few weeks which elapsed between the 2d December 1851, when the *coup d'état* occurred, and the 22d January 1852, on which appeared the decree confiscating the property of the house of Orleans, is a painful episode in Montalembert's career. It is indeed the only painful episode, the only time in which his course can be said to have been in the dark, exposed to the aspersions of his enemies and to the regrets of his friends. For that one moment he was detached from his friends, detached from the open and brilliant and daylight course which he had maintained for so many years. The shadows came round him, obscured his position, seemed as though they might be about to swallow him up. Another figure, greater in the world's eye than he, commanding the destinies of the country, and regarded with wonder by half Europe, came between him and the sun, and wrapped him in a mist of perplexity. Within this mist the true man struggled and pon-

dered, confused for the moment with the dust and tumult of so many falling bulwarks and theories. The President, still President, and more punctilious than ever in his professions of fidelity to the Republic, appointed, on the very day of his *coup d'état*, a Consultative Commission, a list of members of which, containing Montalembert's name, appeared, with the other proclamations in the 'Moniteur,' on the very day of the event. Montalembert hesitated; several of his colleagues, M. Thiers for one, had been arrested, and were now in prison; he declared that it was impossible for him to accept any office while they were in confinement; and he was allowed to believe that it was by his intercession that M. Thiers and some others were released. Even then he gave no formal acceptance of the position, but remained in retirement, still uncertain, silent, overwhelmed with great doubt and rising fears. All of France which was not burning to vote for somebody who would tyrannise over them and keep them quiet, was in doubt and trouble like Montalembert; and from his old clients over all the country, from his old committees which he had organised, from the people who had trusted him for years, though they had been temporarily alienated from him, there came letters in shoals, asking for his

advice in respect to the *plébiscite*—How were they to vote? Montalembert in this point did not trust to his own judgment. He consulted his friends anxiously as to what he should do. He appealed to all whom he had most trusted—priests and laymen. Almost with one accord they advised him to give counsel favourable to the President, and to accept the position offered to him in the *Commission Consultative*. They represented to him that in this new crisis his influence might be of unbounded service to the Church. Prince Louis Napoleon had always been friendly and favourable, and still continued so; and a position of influence in his counsels was, in the interests of France and of Christianity, worth retaining. Of all whom he consulted, and they were many, only two or three gave an unfavourable verdict. Of these we believe one was the Abbé Dupanloup, now Bishop of Orleans, and another the respectable and excellent gentleman who has furnished us with these details, M. Theophile Foisset of Dijon. So many encouragements decided his wavering resolution; and on the 12th December he published a letter which we have found only in the pages of the 'Times,' a document which marks the last step taken in the darkness into which he had wandered. The

reader will perceive that all the enthusiasm even of his latest speech has died out of this painful plea. It is weak in its arguments, the production of a man no longer certain, rather trying to persuade himself that he is certain. Something pathetic is in its very weakness. For the first time in his life his brave voice faltered, his faith failed him. The noble and generous confidence which he had felt in all the previous objects of his championship—the certainty of being right, the cheerful force of conviction—abandoned him now. But with an effort and strain of all his powers, which exhausted him mentally and physically, he tried to rouse in himself his old strength, and to feel the conviction without which he could not speak. He had been sure of the President's generosity and truth even when he spoke last; he said to himself that he was sure of it now; that the necessities of great political danger had forced him into a doubtful course, but that the man was true; and that as soon as the triumph of Authority over Anarchy was secured, he would bring France back to constitutional government and liberty. The reader has but to compare the extracts we have given from the speech upon the *Dotation*, with the following letter (originally published, we believe, in the 'Univers'), to

see the difference between the trust which was spontaneous and genuine, and the forced belief into which he persuaded himself—a dreary echo and ghost of the real—a desperate hope that he might prove to be right, rather than the cheerful certainty of old that he was right—two states of mind as different as twilight and day.

* "PARIS, *December* 12.

"I receive every day letters consulting me on the proper course to follow in present circumstances, and especially as to the ballot, which commences on the 20th inst., in order to respond to the appeal made by the President to the French people. It is physically impossible for me to write to each of the persons who do me the honour to address me, and yet I should be grieved to reply by silence, and an apparent indifference to the confidence manifested towards me, and which has been gained for me by twenty years' political struggles in the cause of the Church and of society. Permit me to express, through the medium of your journal, my opinion.

"I begin by declaring that the act of the 2d December has put to flight the whole of the

* For the translation of this document we are not responsible. We quote it from the pages of the 'Times.'

Revolutionists, the whole of the Socialists, and the whole of the bandits of France and Europe—and that alone is, in my opinion, a more than sufficient reason for all honest men to rejoice, and for those who have been most mortified to console themselves. I do not enter into the question as to whether the *coup d'état* (which had been foreseen by every one) could be executed at another moment and in another manner; to do so I should have to go back to the causes which produced it, and to give my opinion on persons who cannot now reply to me. I do not pretend to guarantee the future any more than to judge of the past. I only look at the present; that is to say, the vote to be delivered on Sunday week.

"There are three courses open—the negative vote, neutrality, and the affirmative vote.

"To vote against Louis Napoleon would be to sanction the Socialist revolution, which for the present, at least, is the only one which can take the place of the actual Government. It would be to invite the Dictatorship of the Reds, instead of the Dictatorship of a Prince who has rendered for three years incomparable services to the cause of order and Catholicism. It would be (admitting the most favourable and the least probable hypothesis) to re-establish that Tower

of Babel which people called the National Assembly, and which, in spite of the honourable and distinguished men it counted in such great numbers, was profoundly divided in the midst of peace and legal order, and which—there is no doubt of the fact—would be powerless in the presence of the formidable crisis we are now exposed to.

"To abstain from voting would be to belie all our antecedents. It would be to fail in the duty we have always recommended and fulfilled under the Monarchy of July as under the Republic; it would be to abdicate the mission of honest men at the very moment that mission is the most imperative and the most beneficial. I highly respect the scruples which may suggest to many honourable minds the idea of abstaining; but I know also that great politicians who otherwise are unscrupulous, and who, after having brought us to the point where we now are—after having condemned us to the loss of all our liberties by the abuse they have made of them or allowed to be made of them—now come and preach to us that we must make a vacuum round the Government. I respect scruples; I protest against tactics. I can conceive nothing more immoral or more stupid; I defy any man alive to justify such conduct to his conscience

or to history. History will tell how all France, after the ignoble surprise of the 24th February, recognised the authority of the men of the Hôtel de Ville, because they offered a chance of escape from the abyss that they themselves had opened. Let those chivalrous persons—if any such there are—who in 1848 protested against the destruction of royalty; against the brutal expulsion of the Two Chambers; against the disarming of the army; against the usurpation of every branch of the Government; against the violation of every law;—let such persons, I repeat, claim the right to protest and to abstain from voting—I have no objection. But I refuse to recognise such a right in any one of those who sent representatives to take the place of the deputies hunted from their benches by a horde of barbarians; to any of those who themselves sat there, and who so sat to proclaim that the Government had merited well of the country, and to vote for the banishment of the house of Bourbon. The conscience that accepted such a yoke for fear of something worse, cannot surely feel any serious difficulty in confirming the power that restored order and security in 1848, and which has alone preserved us from anarchy in 1851.

"The instinct of the masses is no more led

astray now than then. Louis Napoleon will be in 1852, as in 1848, the elect of the nation. Such being the case, I believe there is nothing more imprudent, I should say more insane, for men of religious feeling and men of order, in a country like ours, than to put themselves in opposition with the wishes of the nation, where these mean nothing contrary to the law of God, or to the fundamental conditions of society. There are far too many among us, men worthy of respect, whose policy seems to be to act quite in opposition to the general opinion. When this country went mad for liberty and Parliamentary institutions, these same men appealed to the absolute rights of royalty; now that it is for the moment hungering for silence, calm, and authority, these same men would impose the sovereignty of the tribune and of discussion. If ever the country demand monarchy, the men I allude to will be condemned by such conduct to the perpetuation of the Republic.

"For those men who boldly declare that there is one sole right in political affairs, and that France can only be secured by one principle, I can, strictly speaking, understand the possibility of abstaining, provided these men also abstained in '48. But for us who are Catholics

above all, who have always professed that religion and society should coexist with all forms of government that do not exclude reason and the Catholic faith, I am unable to find a motive that can justify or excuse our voluntary self-annihilation.

"I now come to the third course; namely, the affirmative vote. Now, to vote for Louis Napoleon is not to approve all he has done; it is only to choose between him and the total ruin of France. It does not mean that his government is the one we prefer to all others: it is simply to say that we prefer a prince who has given proofs of resolution and of ability, to those who are at this moment giving their proofs of murder and pillage. It is not to confound the Catholic Church with the cause of a party or family. It is to arm the temporal power, the only power possible at this day, with the necessary strength to vanquish the army of crime, to defend our churches, our homes, our wives, against those who respect nothing, who aim at the Court, who aim at the proprietor, and whose bullets do not spare the priest. It is not to sanction beforehand the errors or faults that a Government, fallible as every earthly institution is, may commit; it is to intrust to the chief whom the nation once

chose for itself, the right of preparing a constitution which will certainly not be more dangerous or absurd than that which 900 representatives, elected in '48, bestowed on France, and against which I had the happiness to vote. I may add that, by returning to the unity of power, without excluding the checks which are the first necessity of every Government, we get over the most difficult part of the way to a real social restoration, that of ideas and morals.

"I have just reperused the lines you permitted me to insert in the 'Univers,' as a rallying-cry to our brothers in dismay on the 27th February 1848, three days after the fall of the throne; I find there these words:—

"'The banner which we have planted outside of, and beyond all, political opinions, is intact. We have not waited till to-day to profess our veneration for holy liberty; to declare war against all kinds of oppression and deceit; to proclaim that the Catholic cause, such as it has always been, and such as we have defended it, was not identified with any power, with any human cause. We love to think that the perseverance with which we have preached for eighteen years this sovereign independence of religious interests will aid French Catholics in understanding and accepting the new phase of society upon which

we have entered. None among them has the right to abdicate.'"

"I have nothing to add to or to take from these words. I believe them quite as suited to the day after that which has been the *revanche* of the army and of authority against the Revolution of the 24th February.

"Observe that I do not advocate absolute confidence or unlimited devotedness. I give myself unreservedly to no one; I profess no idolatry—neither that of the force of arms nor that of the reason of the people. I limit myself to the search of possible good, and to choose in the midst of the shocks with which God visits us, that which is least repugnant to the dignity of a Christian and the good sense of a citizen.

"If Louis Napoleon were an unknown person I should unquestionably hesitate to confer on him such power and such responsibility; but without entering into the question of his policy for three years, I do not forget the great religious acts which have marked his government, so long as concord existed between the two powers of of the State; the liberty of instruction guaranteed; the Pope re-established by French arms; the Church restored to its councils, its synods, the plenitude of its dignity; the gradual aug-

mentation of its colleges, its communities, its works of salvation and mercy.

"Without him I search in vain for a system, a form which can secure to us the conservation and development of similar benefits; I only behold the wide gulf of Socialism. My choice is made. I am for authority against revolt, for preservation against destruction, for Society against Socialism, for the *possible* freedom of good against the *certain* liberty of evil; and in the mighty struggle between the two powers which divide the world, I believe that in acting thus, I am, as I ever have been, for Catholicism against Revolution.

"CH. DE MONTALEMBERT."

How soon Montalembert regretted this utterance it is impossible to tell. During his lifetime he was never himself able publicly to explain it, and his friends have had a natural delicacy in discussing what no doubt was the great mistake of his life. A note in his collected works explains that the letter is omitted there because "the existing regulations of the press being opposed to a complete explanation of the facts which preceded, accompanied, and followed this letter, the author does not feel himself obliged to a repetition of it, which,

without these explanations, would appear like a renewed profession of the sentiments therein contained." The French papers for the moment were quenched, and could make no criticism. The English papers, however, were moved by no such reticence; and the 'Times' did not lose the opportunity to throw some flaming arrows at the great Catholic. It even proclaimed to all the world the new pact made between Rome and tyranny, and speculated on the ferocious privileges of bigotry which were to be given to the religious party by way of paying for their adhesion. It pointed out that already the education of France had been handed over to the clergy by means of that moderate law upon education, which, as we have shown, was from beginning to end a compromise, and called forth the profoundest discontent of the extreme religious party; and it prophesied that "Montalembert and his Jesuits" were now about to enter upon that triumphant "expédition de Rome à l'interieur," which, as we have also shown, had a meaning as distinct from the one thus put upon it as it is possible to conceive. But such considerations do not much affect the hasty commentator of the moment, who has to make his shot flying, and cannot answer for the certainty of his aim.

This period of solemn doubt and pain, interrupted only by the one utterance which we have quoted, lasted not quite two months. In the beginning of January, Montalembert was seized with the first attack of the malady which made his later years a long agony, and ended only with his life. He had attended several meetings of the *Commission Consultative* in the mean time; but all that he or any other of its members had done, had been to verify the lists of voters of the 20th December, the day of the President's re-election. So far from being consulted about any of his measures, they had been kept in absolute ignorance of everything, except the results of his plans, as communicated in the newspapers to all the world. Montalembert's private experience soon taught him, too, another lesson. So long as the election was uncertain, the Prince-President had been graciously attentive to all his suggestions and wishes, and had promised to take into early consideration the measures he advocated. But from the moment when the result of the plebiscite was known, a change came over that gracious countenance. He who was now the master of the destinies of France no longer felt it necessary to *ménager* an individual supporter, whose support he could only reckon upon so long as he dealt faithfully

and honourably with his trust. He became abstracted and constrained in the interviews which still took place between them, and withdrew all pretence of interest in the advice which he never meant to take. Montalembert resisted as long as he could the suggestion thus forced upon him; when he could no longer deceive himself, he withdrew from the Elysée and retired to the silence of his own house, with very serious, and, we may well believe, some bitter thoughts; yet, unselfish and generous as he was, still hoping that perhaps the potentate who was careless of him might be faithful to his country. Very dreary must these wintry days have been in the Rue du Bac: half the men who had frequented that cheerful *salon* were gone out of the country, most of them without any will of theirs; those with whom he had laboured, and among whom he had striven to maintain peace and prosperity in France, were detached from him, scattered like the stragglers of a broken army. Many of them blamed him, as he must have known. Had he already begun to blame himself?

In the very beginning of the year, the highest honour that can be conferred upon any Frenchman was awarded to him by the vote of his peers. He was elected to the vacant *fauteuil* in

the Academy; even this honour, however, was imbittered by the circumstances in which he was placed. It was proposed to give him the ceremonious reception accorded to every academician in January; but the reception had to be delayed for various reasons, one of which is alleged to have been the painful feeling excited in the Academy by the banishment of Victor Hugo, M. de Remusat, and M. Thiers—a misfortune which, as a supposed adviser of the Elysée, Montalembert, it was thought, might have averted, or at least attempted to avert. The fact was, he knew nothing about it until the decree against them reached him, as it reached all the world, in the pages of the 'Moniteur.' Amid all these contrarieties, vexations, and doubts, it is little wonder that he fell ill. Even his illness was misconstrued. He who had never feared man, who had never done deed or said word of which he was ashamed, was said to have counterfeited sickness to escape from the difficulties of his position. "M. de Montalembert," said the 'Times' of the 17th January, "has literally been obliged to hide himself in a pretended sickroom from the general indignation of society at his political apostasy." While he lay upon this painful bed, suffering the agonising pains which were already a sentence of

death within him, he was visited by one of the real counsellors of the President, to offer him the position of senator, along with the *dotation* of 30,000 francs, which Louis Napoleon had reserved to himself the privilege of bestowing. Montalembert refused the offer without hesitation, to the surprise of the messenger. Next day there came another emissary of still more important position to urge the matter, and represent to him all the importance to the President of his name, and to himself and his party of the President's support and favour. As he still refused, the Duc de Morny himself, full of anxiety and urgency, came next day. Montalembert was not a rich man; he had been led into the weakness of a generous support; but to become a partisan with hire for his work was impossible to him. For the third time he refused, and this privately, before the world knew anything about it. While the newspapers were announcing him as one of the new senators, one of the worshippers of the new power; and while the English papers were predicting the terrible consequences which must follow when "Montalembert and his Jesuits" should, sanctioned by Napoleon, set out triumphant on their "expédition de Rome à l'interieur," the shortlived bond was already broken, and the deceived and

humbled champion had struggled forth again into the light of day.

It was not till the 23d January, however, that his withdrawal from all part or lot with the newly-elected chief was made public. On the previous day the decree for the confiscation of the property of the house of Orleans was published in the 'Moniteur.' This sharp and sudden stroke of reality, amid all visions and possibilities, brought down at once the whole fabric of generous imagination and hope. After such an act there was no more to be said or expected. Montalembert wrote at once to the minister who had countersigned the order, M. de Casabianca, resigning the only post he had ever held—the merely nominal position of a member of the Consultative Commission. "Though that Commission," he says, "has not been consulted on any of the acts of the Executive, there does not the less exist in the eyes of the public a species of *solidarité* on the part of its members with the policy of the Government, which it becomes impossible for me henceforward to accept." His resignation was announced in the 'Moniteur,' but only the English papers published this letter. Thus the episode terminated which figures so strangely in his life, and which yet is so perfectly in conformity with his gener-

ous mind and nature. He thought the President unappreciated and ill-used; and breaking from all traditions and prejudices of his own side, boldly stood up for him. He resolved to secure justice for this new man, who had, he thought, done his best; and meant, he hoped, to do his best. He resolved, as we say, that, so far as his support could secure it for him, he should have fair-play. If the leader to whom he lent his generous aid proved unworthy of it, the blame is upon him, and not upon Montalembert.

And here ended the political existence of one of the most eminent politicians—one of the greatest orators—of France. His occupation was gone, as was that of so many others. A dead stillness succeeded to all those tumults of the Assembly in the midst of which they had struggled, and of which they had complained so often. The "Tower of Babel" existed no more. Montalembert kept his seat in the new sham Assembly as representative of the department of Doubs till 1857, when he was unseated by the Government candidate. By that time it had ceased to matter much to him or any one else who occupied that useless seat. The political life of France had stopped as her great orators stopped—as her statesmen dispersed. They were silenced, and so was she. Thence-

forward calmer pursuits of literature—works of history—a new world of fine and beneficent exertion, opened upon the man who thus retired from politics, deceived, mistaken, and overthrown. We do not desire to deny or conceal the full extent of the downfall. It was a downfall as well as a defeat. The following letter to Mr De Lisle expresses with the warmth natural to him the revulsion of feeling with which he regarded, a little while after, the man, or rather the men, who had deceived him :—

"Vichy, *July* 17, 1853.

"I was greatly concerned not to meet you in Paris, where I arrived but a very few days after you had left—but still more, I must confess, at hearing that *you also*—'Et tu, Brute'—were an admirer of the present order of things in France, and a decided partisan of the identification of Catholicism and despotism upheld by the 'Univers.' I had hoped that my arguments and demonstrations would have in some degree convicted you; but from what I hear about your hoping that the Pope will come and crown our present absolute monarch, I must conclude that you and I are unfortunately completely at variance on this most important subject. I shall not attempt to enter into a lengthened dis-

cussion with you upon facts and principles; I trust that time and approaching events will sooner or later open your eyes to the fatal consequences of what is going on in France; but I cannot refrain from expressing my grief and surprise at the strange fact that such a perfect medieval man as you should for one moment admire and adopt a system so completely at variance with the glorious principles and traditions of the Catholic ages of faith and freedom, as the base and stupid rule at present exercised by the Emperor of France. That guilty and ungrateful France may have deserved such a humiliating punishment is not to be doubted, but to transform this humiliation into a merciful and blessed dispensation of truth and Christian justice seems to me quite monstrous. I was, as you may remember, a decided partisan of Louis Napoleon when he was still an honest man, at war with party intrigues on one hand and with socialist passions on the other; while the 'Univers,' with its usual reckless violence, was his decided antagonist, and doing its best to identify the Catholic cause with that of the Count de Chambord. I even went very far in my approbation of his *coup d'état* and its immediate consequences; but I turned away in disgust from the man and his measures as soon as I dis-

covered that he was exclusively directed by mean personal dynastical motives, and led away by the most inexcusable baseness to commit the crime which triumphant socialism had not dared to commit in 1848, and despoil the house of Orleans, who had twice granted him his life, of their legitimate patrimony. . . . I, for one, both as a Catholic and a Frenchman, shall never resign myself to look upon despotism, silence, and base material lucre as the *beau idéal* of governments. When the Church shall have obtained one single liberty—such as those we obtained for her in 1848 and 1849 — when the State shall rank among its chief magistrates one single honest man—then, and not till then, shall I be induced to mitigate my determined opposition to the imperial *régime*."

Yet from the very edge of this cloud—from his sick-chamber, from the deeper depression of that moment of suspense which had worn him out body and soul—we find him rise up once more unconquerable, with all his old energy warm in him, and all his opinions unchanged. His reception at the Academy took place on the 5th of February. It came as if to console him for all the evils he had gone through, the most prized reward of French genius and toil. It is,

as most of our readers are probably aware, the custom on such occasions that the new member should give a sketch of the life and character of his predecessor in his seat, and pronounce an *éloge* upon him. Montalembert's predecessor was M. Droz, a historical and philosophical writer, but little known nowadays, who had lived through the first Revolution, had entered into all its delusions and enthusiasms, and had gradually worked his way into Christianity from the lowest ground of scepticism. The subject was one which suited the speaker. In setting forth the career of M. Droz he was able to give a brilliant sketch of the age in which he lived, of the Constituent Assembly of 1789, to whose work all the subsequent convulsions of France might be traced, and of the sole hope which remained for France and for all men—the regeneration by religion which his hero had exemplified in his own person. The Academy was crowded much beyond its ordinary audience, even the *fauteuils* of the academicians being invaded by the curious crowd, excited by the antecedents of the great speaker they had come to hear, and especially by the last chapter in his history; and, at the same time, by the novelty of his appearance—the most distinguished Catholic layman of his time—in a community so

little religious. "Much curiosity," says the Abbé Dourlens, "was shown to hear the words which the Son of the Crusaders was about to address to the learned assembly which counted in its ranks so large a number of those whom he had so energetically and so justly entitled the Sons of Voltaire." But neither the painful crisis through which he had just passed, nor the novel character of the assembly in which he now found himself, affected the eloquence or the courage of Montalembert. No evidence of the depression of defeat or of illness appears in his speech. On the contrary, he took a dignified and calm but decided advantage of his position to make his unchanged opinions known. He set before his hearers a vivid picture of the Revolutionary Assembly, which had "destroyed everything, that everything might be re-created." He launched forth some of those epigrammatic phrases which recur so frequently in his speeches, and which are capable of a separated life. He pointed out the "mania of uniformity" with which the Assembly of 1789 had been possessed, and declared inequality to be "the evident condition of activity, fruitfulness, and social life—at once the mother and the child of freedom; while equality was only conceivable as associated with despotism." With

a mind full of the renewed and present calamities which the state of France was so well calculated to impress on every spectator, and much more on one who had so struggled and suffered, he pointed out the great burden which the legislators of 1789 had left upon their country.

"Let us not forget that it is they who have written in our laws and in our hearts, in despite of nature and good sense, that vain hope of equality, the realisation of which, always promised and always expected, would leave society in a permanent state of falsehood and of warfare. To open the most brilliant careers to true merit—to satisfy all lawful ambition, by means of labour and perseverance—is a duty; but to stimulate the factitious and criminal production of unlimited pretensions by overthrowing all the barriers—pliable enough in themselves—which tradition, habit, and family associations, oppose to the torrent of greedy mediocrities, this was a criminal folly. It is a folly we have made for ourselves, and we must pay the penalty. This we must frankly confess in the midst of the dangers by which we are assailed: by calling all to every position (*tous à tout*), the evil which was supposed to be destroyed was aggravated; slumber-

ing ambitions were awakened without any power to satisfy them; all cupidities were roused, provoked, and inflamed, while the right and power of restraining them was given away. The profoundest of protecting sentiments, the happiness of feeling one's self in one's place, in one's rank, has been destroyed; society has promised more than she can ever give; the problem has now become insoluble, and all France has been made the victim of an odious deception."

And in the midst of the "sons of Voltaire," eagerly listening round him, in the very bosom of the Academy which not many years before had sung the praises of Voltaire, and to which a profession of religious faith was little familiar, this beaten politician, this defeated champion, once more raised his head, and proclaimed, as he had always proclaimed, his panacea for the evils of the country. "To escape this melancholy fate, there is but one way to follow—that of an energetic return to the fundamental laws which God has given as rules to the conscience and to society. . . . The idea of authority can only be produced by the idea of God." Thus the man who had proclaimed the divine rights of Christianity before revolutionary Assemblies and Constitutional Parliaments; who had startled an unbelieving age, if not into faith in religion, yet

to belief in his faith; who had proclaimed, by such strange mediums as electioneering addresses and newspaper articles, the supreme value and necessity of religion—carried his message to the last corner remaining in his sphere which had not yet rung with it; and proclaimed to the dignified, the learned, the supreme Academy, what he had proclaimed to every other class of his countrymen. The very moment of his downfall thus became the crown and climax of his career.

The election of Montalembert to the Academy, at this point of his life, was one of those consolatory circumstances which occur now and then in human existence, like special compensations of Providence to the faithful but beaten soldier. It was the opening of a door of honourable and worthy retreat from the other and dangerous path, where he had endured so many fatigues and toils, and from which he had not issued but with loss. The thanks which he rendered to his new colleagues were warm with this soothed and softened feeling, and showed that the more peaceful life beyond was not without its attractions for him, notwithstanding all the grief and pain with which he felt himself compelled to resign his former and more brilliant career.

"You have opened to me," he says, "in the

midst of the storm, a port not always attained by those who most desire it. You have permitted me the hope of finding daily here my future models, friends proved in other struggles, and adversaries changed to allies. Here I will live with them, learning and enjoying that equity, impartiality, and self-restraint which make the strength and charm of your existence —happy if I may henceforward, free from the fatigues, the mistakes, and the animosities of political life, dedicate myself entirely to the noble studies and laborious leisure which find here their sanctuary."

A certain languor, a suppressed sigh, seems to breathe through these words. Dear to Montalembert's soul were the noble studies, and if not the leisure, at least the labour to which he thus vowed himself; but he never affected to choose willingly this change of occupation. The stirs and tumults of political life were still dearer to him; with bitter regret, and that sense of impotence which is more galling than any other misfortune to an eager and able mind, he relinquished his natural, his habitual, and beloved career. He might no longer fight for God, for France, for religion, and freedom; other ways might still remain of serving both

his Maker and his country; yet it is not without a sigh, a moan suppressed, yet deep and bitter, that he turns towards the stiller path, and lays his useless weapons out of his reluctant hand.

By way of conclusion to the record of those public services and struggles which had occupied so much of his life, we may here add another letter of late date, which shows how bitterly Montalembert felt his final dismissal even from the nominal service of his country, and the means by which that dismissal was brought about:—

"Vichy, *July* 19, 1857.

"You will have probably seen in the papers that after twenty-six years of public service I have been set aside in the recent elections, and for the first time since I came of age deprived of a vote in the councils of my country; and this, thanks to the *Clergy* of Franche Comté, half of whom voted against me, and the other half stayed at home; such has been the result of the influence of the 'Univers,' and of its calumnies and denunciations for the last seven years against me and my friends. Although I cannot feel much aggrieved by becoming *à mon tour* a victim to that ostracism against all honest and intelligent men which is the fundamental principle of the imperial

government in France, yet I must blush at the conduct of the clergy. If they had set up against me a man like Veuillot or some such, whose fanatical ravings they approve of, I should have understood their preferring him: but to give me up, the oldest, and, I think I may say, the stanchest soldier the Church has known in France for many long years, in order to nominate an unknown young man without any sort of public or private virtue, who has never done, and never will do, anything either for religion or for society, but who belongs to the Imperial domesticity, and rejoices in wearing a chamberlain's key behind his back—this, you will confess, shows to what a degree the feeling of honour has been exploded amongst those who follow the inspirations of the leading Catholic journal so much admired and held up in England and Scotland. . . . Be assured," he adds in the same letter, speaking of some trifling differences of sentiment between himself and his correspondent, "that we are quite of the same opinion *au fond*, and even on the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, which, like you, I do not look upon as essential to the maintenance of his spiritual authority, but which I cannot bear to see demolished or undermined by either monarchical or democratical despotism."

CHAPTER XVI.

AFTER THE CONFLICT—HOME LIFE—LA ROCHE EN BRENY.

When Montalembert was thus driven from public life, or at least from all hope and power of effectual intervention in it, he was but forty-two. Life had lost none of its charms, none of its forces for him. He had indeed endured the first attacks of a fatal disease, but fortunately no special prescience was accorded to him any more than to others, and he was unaware of the oft-repeated assaults that awaited him, and of the slow-coming death which had already opened its first parallel. He was still comparatively young, and his genius was in its full glory. When he was left free from the anxious cares, the heavy responsibilities, and weariness of statesmanship, he had his own happy domestic life awaiting him, and many other worthy ways of using the powers which God had given.

"Courage," a friend wrote to him; "I am not one of those who think you an *homme fini*. Your life may be hidden instead of public, but it will not the less be spent in God's service." In the summer of 1852 his health required a visit to Vichy, and from thence he wrote to his little daughter a letter, in which the prospect of time before him for other labours appears far from painful. "I hope to be ready next year with my history of the monks from St Benedict to St Bernard," he says, addressing his child in English, a language which he was very anxious his daughters should understand and appreciate; "my dear little girl will be able to read it as soon as it is published. And thus you will come to the period of S. Elizabeth, your patroness, and will be qualified to understand and appreciate her life written by me before you were born." In this same letter he applauds the practice of making notes of all the books that came under the young reader's observation, which had been his own practice from a very early age. "The little I know," he adds, "is owing almost exclusively to the constant rule I followed of taking notes, partially chronological, on every book I read." He winds up playfully by a criticism upon the handwriting of his young correspondent, which shows how

minute was the attention which he paid to everything concerning the education of his children. "I kiss you tenderly, my child," he writes; "and if you would put some *boucles* to your *e*'s in writing your next letter, it would not spoil your happiness, but would add greatly to my pleasure." Many another such playful and gentle lesson occurs in the other letters addressed to his girls. His heart was with them wherever he went; his kind and continual messages of "respectful remembrance" to their excellent governess, his advice and comments on all subjects, are full of the tenderest love and thoughtfulness. In the midst of the excitement of the Revolution, he takes leisure to regret his walks and talks with them, and the suspension of their English lessons; and the very day of a great speech, will pause to tell his dearest little Catherine, his gentle Elizabeth, that their German is improving, or their grammar defective. These little letters will scarcely bear quotation, —they are so brief, so simple, so full of those pleasant allusions to the special characteristics of his correspondents, and the delicious incommunicable jests of the family, which make them priceless for the household, but less comprehensible to strangers; but they carry the imagination at once into the genial domestic circle at

La Roche,—the happy house which is still full of his memory, and the impression of all his tastes and habits, though its happiness has departed with him into a world less transitory than this.

La Roche en Breny is a fine old edifice, which dates from the fifteenth century, though it has since then sustained many changes. It is situated on a rising ground close by a large Burgundian village, no doubt originally dependent upon it, but which now regards the castle and its inhabitants with that mixture of friendship and hostility which is common to French peasants when the representatives of their old seigneurs are courteous and kind: friendship because they are neighbours,—and it is not in French nature to be permanently surly; but hostile because they are nobles and great people, enjoying a position different from "nous autres," and claiming a certain respect and consideration. Nothing could be more different from the often servile subjection of an English village in like circumstances, to which the castle would be the representative of all authority and greatness. The village of La Roche, with its little band of functionaries, its *maire* and *adjoint*, its *conseil municipal*, its formalities and gradations of rank, is utterly unlike the straggling

cluster of habitations near the lodge-gates of a great English country-house — and many a humorous and curious phase of French country-life might be drawn out by the contrast. No doubt the entire and tremendous overturn of all hereditary associations which occurred at the end of last century has much to do with this curious semi-enmity; and the Montalemberts, though noble among the noble, had no ancient place in the recollections of the people, and had acquired the *vieux manoir* by purchase only. When M. de Montalembert made this purchase in 1841, the undulating stretch of open landscape, low hills, and breezy *côtes* bore a considerable resemblance to some parts of Scotland, —the pastoral districts of Dumfriesshire, for example,—except that the hills were less high and the roads much more straight. Yet even the roads were not straight in this rural portion of the Côte d'Or. Those long white lines, straight as an arrow, and as direct as its flight, which fatigue the eye in northern France, find no place in this hilly district. Though it is in the Côte d'Or, rich golden region, full of wealth and fruitfulness, yet no vines, only waving broom and golden gorse, covered those low slopes in their wavy undulations, and crept about the edges of the gleaming fish-ponds. These, and

a lowly farmhouse on a hill, or the *clocher* of some village, gave interest to a somewhat monotonous and bare district. Had it been in England, it might even have been called sad. The château of La Roche looked over a broad stretch of this monotonous country, where there were few trees, and nothing but the broom and gorse and heather to cover the stony hillsides. The highroad from Paris to Marseilles went through the village, and a certain animation, now passed away, was thus given to the quiet country, and a resource to its inhabitants. The castle stood bare out of this homely landscape, revealing itself nakedly with its fine turrets and broad moat to the passer-by. The reader who may have seen La Roche in recent days, will, we are aware, read this description breathless with the desire to contradict and set us right. The château now stands enfolded in many a lovely *bosquet*, screened off from vulgar observation by solemn little pine-forests, and surrounded by many a delightful variety of woodland scenery. All these, however, like the speeches we have recorded, like the books we place upon our shelves, come into this biography as part of the work which it is our business to record. Every *bosquet*, every tuft of varied wood, every bit of avenue, and shadowy group of firs, is

the creation of Montalembert. He settled down in his bare turreted château, with the chilly moat shutting him out from the broad, *triste*, unfeatured country; and by degrees, as a man clothes himself, the *côtes* around put on mantles of verdure, the hill-tops darkened over with lines of mantling foliage, the fish-ponds veiled themselves with waving woods, and every friendly tree which shelters man grew round, and shaded and adorned the house of the master who planted, and tended, and loved them. Never were there more poetic woods. The paths wind up and down, ascending and descending under great oak-branches, under the mysterious heaviness of the tufted pines. No vulgar forester, but a man with the eye of a poet and the hand of an artist, has arranged every opening, every distant vista, nay, even the separate groups that stand up together friendly and diverse out of the green of the little park. Twenty years' work, not much more,—a few years beyond the time which he gave to the Education Bill; but nature, though she is slow, repays her patient cultivator better than man does. "Of all my projects, this is the only one that bears fruit," he said, half sadly, half playfully, to one of his visitors in the last years of his life. His patri-

otic hopes were crushed, his plans had met with confusion and failure; but through good and evil, through the hot strife and the chill quiet after, his trees grew and flourished. It was some compensation amidst the disappointments of his life.

There were various reasons for undertaking this work,—one, that the land was but poor, and unfit for produce which should more immediately repay the cultivator; another, that he might be able to give work to the villagers, who, though they would not have willingly acknowledged it, were often dependent on the château for help; and lastly, for beauty's sake. Probably this last was first in the thoughts of the young Count, when he brought his young wife from the shadow of her ancestral woods to this new home; for the open moorland country, far from town or society of any kind, was not beautiful in itself, except to the hopeful eye of imagination, which already saw all that might be made of it. The patient labour and calculation necessary for accomplishing this gentle revolution, which has entirely changed the face of the country about, could scarcely be over-estimated. We believe matters have so turned out, that no speculation could have succeeded better had it been

made for the sake of gain; and we can testify that no artistic effort could have succeeded better, had it been made entirely for the sake of beauty.

The house within wanted scarcely less labour than the bare and unsheltered environs. Its outside was all that such a lover of antiquity could desire; and to make its interior proportionately fair was the cherished and delightful occupation of years. This was not done, we need scarcely say, with Paris upholstery, the gilding, and the satin, and all the luxury which the ordinary Frenchman loves. Montalembert had better inspirations. And it would be hard to describe to any one who has not seen it how entirely he has made the ancient place his own. Every line of its decoration he himself had studied; every piece of furniture had its history; the very ivy which clothes its front, and looks as old as the wall it clings to, owes its life to his hand. The storied rafters overhead, inscribed with those pregnant mottoes full of noble meaning, which are the very quintessence of the past; the tapestried walls, the library with all its wealth, the quaint little chapel,—every detail bears his mark. And when the stranger leaves the sunny terrace of the garden front, and

crossing one green stretch of lawn all ablaze with sunshine, suddenly finds himself in the dim mysterious shade of a miniature pine-forest—where he feels as if he were in the depths of the woods, yet knows that he is within sight and sound of a great fully-inhabited house,—the sense that it is the home of an artist and a poet becomes doubly certain to him. Never was such a fairy refuge as that *bosquet* of pines—dim, though the sun as he shines in Burgundy is blazing outside—a delicious enchanted twilight in the glowing heart of the day; and the little fish twinkle in the moat; the lichened walls glow sober yet warm in the light; the trees wave in the friendly breezes, refreshing the summer air, and the eyes wearied with too much brightness. This is the summer aspect of the place.

But it is scarcely less beautiful when the great pine-trees hang heavy with snow, each branch weighted with a dazzling mass, which changes its guise without changing its character; when the moat is one sheet of ice, and the sky, heavy with more snow to come, closes in quickly over the feeble day, and gives to evening all the delightful attractions of a bright interior. On such winter nights it was Montalembert's delight to have a great fagot placed

on the lordly hearth, and to watch the broad joyous flame lighting up into wavering sudden glory the romantic landscape and picturesque figures in the tapestry, and finding out with its illumination the devices on the rafters, flinging all their dimness into sudden light. The blaze of the fagot, revealing one inscription after another on the emblazoned roof, was like some more sudden and subtle light shining upon the knightly heart and mind of the *fils des Croisés* on his own genial hearth. *Ou bien, ou rien; Plus d'honneur que d'honneurs* (the proud motto of the Merodes); *Pour l'âme et l'honneur;*—such were the sayings, old apophthegms, taken for their emblems by noble races, which shone out under the lively and cheerful light. Within that light collected by times some of the finest spirits of France, gathering around him who was one of the most eloquent and most brilliant of Frenchmen. It does not become any guest of that house to note to public gaze the other bright and gentle faces that filled up the family circle; but yet it would be to miss one of the most delightful aspects of Montalembert's character did we not return once more to its paternal side, and give some such indications as are possible of his beautiful devotion to his children. From the grave

intellectual counsels which he delighted to give when they became able to appreciate them, to the playful malice with which he would exhibit to strangers the "Cadran de la Conduite,"—a novel barometer of his own invention, by which might be seen how the nursery temperature varied, and whether the needle pointed to *Cris aigus* and *désobéissance*, or to the sunnier moods of good behaviour, — every particular of his intercourse with his girls is delightful, — so tender, so bright, so gentle, so chivalrous was he, reverent of the womanhood of the little maidens even while uttering his soft reproofs and fatherly admonitions. "Sweet daughter," he writes in English, with that fond fancy of bringing its sweetest phrases from another tongue, costlier for being far, which we find so natural when it places on English lips the superlatives of Italian fondness, but which it amuses and pleases the English reader to find put in practice with his own unimpassioned tongue. "Nothing can make me happier than to give you a pleasure, my beloved girl," writes the tender father. "I trust you are quite convinced of that, and will remember when I am dead and gone that your father was very fond of you, and in the midst of all his troubles and labours had no better consolation than to see

his children happy." This was the sentiment which ran through all his later years, and which made La Roche so truly and brightly the family home.

Nor was the village without its humours, which amused the weary politician by their comical travesty of the bigger bustles and tempests of the State. "Our great event here," he writes on one occasion, "is the final downfall of the Maire * *, who has been replaced by * * *, the shopkeeper. The latter accepted the post with reluctance, and on taking possession on Thursday he made a *speech from the throne*, with the help of a piece of paper, in which he announced that he intended to abdicate next year in my favour. In the mean time I congratulate myself on not having been chosen." "The Parliament of La Roche waited my arrival to hold its quarterly session in February," he adds at a later period. "I was therefore obliged to attend the sitting yesterday, and to assist at the dispute between M. * * *, the head of the Government, and M. * *, the chief of the Opposition. The latter acquitted himself of his duties with all the bitterness and ill-feeling which the position demands; while poor * * * did not know what to make of himself, and

M—— kept silence in the most ominous way. M. le Curé groans in the retirement of his parsonage, and the great T—— manœuvres behind backs to recover the majority and the reins of power at the approaching election. Men have everywhere a rare talent for disputing, and for making each other's lives difficult and disagreeable."

La Roche, however, was not always respectful, even to the troublesome extent of postponing its Parliament for the arrival of M. le Comte. At the time of the Revolution in 1848, as has been already mentioned, a raid was made upon the recently planted woods, which annoyed their owner much. "I have been at the oak of S. Elizabeth, at that of S. Catherine, and at that of our dear Albertine," he wrote, immediately after this senseless attack (for he had the pretty fancy of dedicating certain oaks, the greatest and finest in his possessions,—old oaks, the survivors of ancient forests, to his children or their patron saints). "All are in very good health, but I think that of Catherine will last longest of the three. The rascals have cut many of the trees in our woods, especially our fine larches, epiceas, and pines; but they have not harmed our great oaks; and if God permits us to return in peace,

as we must hope He will, we shall still be able to hold our little feasts under the trees which I have given to you three."

A still more curious instance of the strange dormant rapacity and lawlessness which has been worked by a series of revolutions into the nature of the French peasant, was given at another moment of political excitement, and shows in what wonderful ways the high tide of political fermentation eddies down to the far depths of the country, and how it shows itself there. One day, some one in an adjoining hamlet announced to his fellow-villagers that next morning the château of La Roche was to be pillaged. The hamlet was perfectly peaceable, possessed by no ill-feeling towards its noble neighbours; but the news spread as a piece of news, without any apparent feeling of one kind or another. "*Ah! demain on doit piller le château?*" the good folk said to each other pleasantly interrogative; and next morning accordingly, with tranquil expectation, a party of men set out, meaning no particular harm, but feeling that a share of the spoil would do themselves good, and—as the château was to be pillaged anyhow—M. le Comte no harm. Half-way, however, some better-informed villagers of La Roche met the men in

their clean blouses. "The château is to be pillaged to-day, *n'est ce pas?*" said the newcomers tranquilly. But when they were convinced to the contrary, the heavy fellows turned placidly back, clanking homeward in their *sabots* with all the stolidity of moral languor. *Ce n'est pas pour aujourd'hui,* was probably their calm report to their families. No sort of passion, republican fury, or opinion of one kind or another, was involved — no wrong done; only a calm sense that the pillage of the château might at any moment be on the cards, and that in such a case it was one's duty to one's family to be on the spot and get one's share.

Along with this curious evidence of the habits of the popular mind, and no doubt derived from the same revolutionary tradition, is that other superstition of uneducated Frenchmen, of which we have had many painful proofs recently—their mental need, if we may use such an expression, of some typical traitor, whose presence accounts for every repulse, and guards their *amour propre* from all suspicion that they themselves may have been in the wrong. Perhaps this necessity is not peculiar to the French; but it is, we believe, peculiar to them, and an evident relic of the days when

the *aristocrate* was the source of all evil, that they should identify this traitor everywhere with their own nobles. During the Crimean war, Count de Montalembert, one of the most patriotic of Frenchmen, was generally believed by his country neighbours to have been convicted *of sending guns to the Russians*, and indeed was supposed, both at La Roche and at Maïche, in Franche Comté, where he had another residence, to have been put in prison for this likely crime. The same wise people at La Roche, we may add—but this *en parenthèse*—made up their minds that the small sums collected by their excellent curé during the recent war for the aid of the wounded, were sent by him to the Prussians,—every enemy of France in succession having thus some mysterious and inexplicable connection with the nobles and the priests.

We may leave this very grave subject, however, for pleasanter details, one of which is recalled to us by the mention of the Crimean war. While the world was convulsed by that great reopening of European hostilities, Montalembert wrote from Paris, to one of his girls in the country, a playful account of her little sister. "Little M. continues to reason much," he says. "The death of the Emperor Nicolas

interested her greatly. She inquired most closely what was an *autocrate;* and after having carefully weighed your mamma's explanations and mine, she expressed her conclusion in these words: 'Yes, I understand; an autocrat is something still worse than an emperor'" (*un autocrate, c'est encore pire qu'un empereur!)*

Sometimes, but very rarely, a shade of sadness, the reflection of the disappointments and mortifications of his life, appears in these letters to his children. He writes of a death which he has heard of through one of his girls, wondering that there has been no note of it in the papers. "And yet," he says, "M. de —— was a considerable personage in his day. But we live in a country essentially forgetful; and my sweet Catherine will see her father, whom she has known as 'celebrated,' die without notice from any one. For this reason, one must seek one's recompense elsewhere and higher; and," he adds, with a delightful change into the happier personal view of the subject, "make one's self loved by one's girls, that they may not forget one the day after death."

It will be seen by our reference to his girls, that Montalembert had no son to bear his name or inherit his genius. Sons of great men but seldom do this last, let us believe for his com-

fort. Yet there is to us a serio-comic gravity in a brief note, written at midnight from the château of Maïche, in which he consoles one of his children for the sex of the latest born. "Another daughter! Be consoled, though you have an additional sister," he writes. It was not serio-comic, however, to him, but a great trouble to the family and all its retainers at Maïche, where the good Franc-comtois had prepared all manner of rejoicing in case Heaven should be favourable and send an heir. There is an amusing story current in the family, of how the humiliated and distressed doctor, feeling the disappointment keenly, broke the curé's rest by knocking at his window in the middle of the night, and announcing in a lugubrious voice, "Monsieur le Curé, c'est une fille!" to which the amazed curé, half awake, answered, like Mr Shandy, "What is a girl?"

The little one, received with so much disappointment, grew, however, to be the very light of her father's eyes—"*Ce bonheur*" is one of the pretty playful names by which he called his youngest child.

We cannot better conclude this simple little home chapter than by a more serious letter addressed to one of his daughters, when she grew old enough to require serious guidance in

her studies, and to understand the graver depths of her father's sympathies and thoughts :—

"The details of your reading which you give me interest me much. I am also a great admirer of Washington, but I find him a little cold; and M. de Witt has rendered poor service to his glory, by proving that he was *scarcely* a Christian, and perhaps more a deist than anything else. It is almost certain that the Americans had right on their side; but it would be too unjust to upbraid the English with a great crime, in not having seen that the time had come to apply to their colonies principles which no people in the world had ever conceded to them. Recollect how the Greeks and Romans treated their colonies; and, above all, remember what the Spaniards, who should have set a good example, were for the Americans of Mexico and Peru. It is true that the English have neither liking for, nor understanding of, the liberty of others; but it is a great thing to be determined to have freedom one's self, and to be able to win and keep that freedom with the civic dignity which befits it. This is certainly a much finer *rôle* than to exterminate successively all the inhabitants of a new world, as the Spaniards have done; or to behead kings and queens, priests

and nobles, and hosts of innocent persons besides, under pretext of insuring freedom to the world, as has been done in France. But in respect to your reading, I wish you to go back without delay to the Charles I. of M. Guizot, which I gave you last year, in order that this portion of history may keep its proper place in your mind, between that of Cromwell which you have read, and that of Macaulay which you began and which you must continue with me. You will thus be mistress of the most dramatic portion of the history of England, and that which has been the most fully recorded."

Thus, instructing his children, making them wise in play, loving them above all; planting his trees, opening the sides of his sunny *côtes* with pleasant walks; working for hours together in the library, where all the laboriously-collected materials for his great work were at his hand; and at the same time looking out from his loophole of retreat with an observation which was sometimes sympathetic, but more often sad and bitter, as he gazed impotent at the vexatious bonds which crushed his country —Montalembert lived and laboured. Whenever an opportunity arose to say a warning word or point a lesson, he was ready with his

pen to do what was no longer permitted to his eloquent lips. In this semi-retirement, silenced and withdrawn from the world's bigger arena, the only thing of which he was incapable was uselessness. He wrote, as we have just said, on every subject of current interest which affected the great principles of his life, religion, and freedom; and he worked at his great book often half the night, making his way to his room, which adjoined his library, hours after all the household slept. His country-house was not, as the reader may suppose, his only or chief dwelling-place; for Montalembert still loved Paris as all Frenchmen love it, and still gathered his friends about him in the Rue du Bac, and talked, as he loved to talk, as people talk only in Paris, with many companions of his former life still at hand. But as it is our English notion that a man discloses himself most fully in the "home," which all our possessions and prejudices place in the country, we have preferred to collect these little personal recollections around his dear La Roche. He, too, had enough of English sentiment in him to cherish above all other dwelling-places his country home. It was not like an English house. The autumn brought no shooting-parties, no covey of gaitered sportsmen to

disturb the game in his growing woods. The interests most cultivated there were those of the intellect, and the partridges were left in peace. But the life was full, animated, and happy, before the shadow of sickness came to sadden it. Dulness knew not the way to get admission. With a mind ever open to new interests, and a quick eye and ear for all that was beautiful and good, the master of the house filled it with his kind, and manly, and bright, and genial presence. He is there now in every corner, in the chair he no longer needs, on the balcony where he watched his woods, in every shadowy *bosquet*, and by every glimmering pool. The whole place breathes of him, hangs upon his recollection, though the genial voice is silent, and the kind presence is seen no more.

CHAPTER XVII.

HIS JOURNEYS, AND THEIR RESULTS.

The latter part of Montalembert's life was occupied with literary work, which we shall describe and chronicle in another chapter; and it was diversified by many journeys. All his life he had loved to travel. Beginning early with the remote northern capital of Sweden, he had pursued his beloved researches into religious literature and art through all Germany, where we have traced him in those early days when the dear S. Elizabeth was the sacred object of his affections; and through Italy, to which he returned again and again, with that love which Italy, of all nations, secures most warmly from her foreign visitors, and which was intensified to him by his supreme reverence for, and allegiance to, the Church and the Holy See. It had been the desire of his life to visit the still more sacred hills and

plains of Palestine; but the journey begun with that intent had been cut short, we think, at Constantinople, in consequence of the struggle going on between the Viceroy of Egypt and the Sublime Porte, which made the pilgrim's further progress impossible for the moment. After his retirement from public life he had more time to travel, and he made three successive journeys into England—as well as expeditions, not one of which was without record, into Hungary, Poland, and Spain. His first visit to England after the *coup d'état* — an event which bore almost as much importance in his individual life as in that of France—was in the spring of 1855. From this journey sprang the book entitled 'L'Avenir Politique de l'Angleterre,' with its wonderfully true and intelligent descriptions of English life, society, and modes of thought,—descriptions which perhaps no foreign observer has ever equalled. To compare these brilliant and lifelike sketches with the absurdities given forth by even so well qualified an observer as the last French explorer who has visited our barbarous coasts, the accomplished philosopher, M. Taine, will at once show the reader how infinite was the superiority in knowledge and apprehension of our country and its ways possessed by the noble Frenchman,

whose English blood had so strange and so enduring an influence upon his life. There is always something curious, something which half amuses, half pleases, half affronts a people in the analysis of their character which is made from outside, and which so often fails utterly in real understanding, from sheer vividness of superficial perception. Montalembert, however, was himself English enough to require no logical balance in our national character, but to take us as we are—the most irregular in our regularity, the most law-obeying and law-eluding, the most monotonous and the most spontaneous of races. He understood our rule and want of rule with a perfect and genial knowledge, and had penetrated to the very springs of national life. "England," he says, "is not one of those parks with straight walks and trim trees, where the vision extends in a direct line till it is lost in distance, and where everything is lined out, kept in order, sanded and watered, by order of police. It is a vigorous and thick-growing forest, where there are good and bad corners, charming lawns and abominable ditches, venerable oaks and entangled brushwood, where everything is spontaneous, robust, and natural, and where an abounding vitality bursts forth on every side."

The book is too well known to justify us in making quotations from it. It is an examination into the question whether England could or could not resist the democratic tide which seemed to Montalembert to be sweeping across the world—whether her institutions were strong enough to outlive that new spiritual invasion, and her national principles sufficiently firmly founded to withstand the evil in it,—a question which he answers in the affirmative. It is somewhat curious to compare his opinions, thus delivered in the maturity of his judgment, with the youthful sentiment of his first verdict upon England and her ways, given to the world when he was twenty in the pages of the 'Correspondant.'* The riper work is calmer in tone, but it is unchanged in opinion. It gives less importance, perhaps, to the aristocratic element, but it still marks its power and vitality; and, in short, but for the inevitable modification of youthful impetuosity, the book of 1855 is but a development of the article of 1830,—a very remarkable testimony to the justice and good sense of the early conclusions made by so very young and inexperienced a critic.

The only point in which, in this publication, the writer takes exception to England, is in

* See vol. i. chap. iv.

respect to her foreign policy. This was one of his favourite subjects of attack. From the day when he had congratulated himself on doing justice upon various *scélérats* in his great speech on the *Sonderbund*, delivered in January '48 (and, indeed, long before that), the policy of Lord Palmerston had been always obnoxious to him. "I maintain," he says in 1855, "the same opinion which I expressed on the eve of the catastrophe of 1848. I then pointed out Lord Palmerston—the champion of Pacifico in Greece, the oppressor of the small cantons in Switzerland—as the great auxiliary of revolution as against liberty, and of contempt for the rights of the weak." We have no desire to defend Lord Palmerston's policy, or, indeed, to enter into the lists on behalf of the foreign policy of England in general, which is a matter subject to as much comment as any other public question among ourselves; but it is amusing to note the personal impression made upon the French critic by the aspect of the great *scélérat* himself, jauntiest and most cheerful of statesmen. "I had yesterday a long conversation with Lord Palmerston," he writes, "and I must acknowledge that, in spite of the repugnance which I have for his political principles, it would be difficult to find a man more agreeable, more

spirituel or *younger*, notwithstanding that he is seventy-three."

The little volume upon 'L'Avenir Politique de l'Angleterre' was received everywhere in England with the greatest interest and favour. That it must have also awakened great interest in France is evident from the fact that the edition before us, which was published in 1860, was the sixth. In the publisher's preface prefixed to this, it is proudly recorded that "the impression produced upon England itself by this book does not seem to grow weaker,"—a statement which is proved by the fact that "all the reviews and the principal journals take pains daily to develop, contest, or confirm the judgments and previsions of the author;" and that "it has had, in addition, an honour which, we believe, has never been accorded to any foreign book or writer: it has been the occasion of a debate in the English Parliament, and, while appealed to on all sides as an authority for the most different opinions, has received unanimous applause." This discussion took place on the 24th April 1856, and was on the subject of opening civil employments to competition—a subject which Montalembert certainly had not entered upon. His opinions, accordingly, though quoted on all sides, could scarcely

have had very much effect on the debate; but there could not have been a more striking proof of the impression made by the book.

Three years later he repeated his visit to England, with effects still more noticeable. "I leave you, sweet daughter," he says in a letter to one of his children, dated the 17th May 1858, "to go to the House of Commons, where the fate of the Derby-Disraeli Ministry is about to be decided. I suppose the 'Journal des Débats' will keep you informed of the merits of the present crisis in England. Without knowing it, I have chosen for my visit one of the most interesting and decisive moments of English history: all the past and all the future of the English dominion in India is in question."

The crisis which he thus describes was the great debate raised by a proclamation made by Lord Canning, as Governor-General of India, at the end of the mutiny, by which the property of the Talookdars, or native landed proprietors of Oude, who had not made their submission to the English authorities, was confiscated. The Government of Lord Derby had at once intimated its disapproval of this proclamation,—a disapproval expressed only too promptly and strongly in Lord Ellenborough's famous despatch; and, taking advantage of the imprudence

of this disavowal, made while the strife was scarcely over, by which the hands of the Viceroy would be weakened at the moment when he required the full use of his powers, Lord Palmerston and his party had made an attack upon the Ministry, which their weak majority and doubtful tenure made it very unlikely they could resist. This was the debate which Montalembert set himself to describe, and which reads like a chapter out of a romance, so vivid and lifelike is the story, so brilliantly and clearly is it set before us, with all its panoramic varieties and magic changing of the scene. Montalembert's appreciation of every individual speaker, as well as of the way in which a doubtful majority, not quite sure of its wisest course, sympathising more or less with both sides of the question,—condemning the failure of real justice on the one hand, yet discontented with the apparent abandonment of a great functionary on the other,—was moved by side currents and winds of eloquence into a departure from its foregone conclusions, is most vivid and most profound. It is at once a picture, a fine piece of mental analysis, and the most clear, distinct, and real history. When he describes how the debate was interrupted at its hottest by the *Derby*, there is, it is true, a possibility that his French

readers may have been led to believe that the adjournment was exceptional, and principally due to the fact that Lord Derby, the head of the Government then in peril, had a horse which was going to run; for he does not sufficiently acknowledge the habitual nature of the interruption. But, barring this, the picture is perfect; and though every new touch is given in support of that theory of national character which possessed the noble visitor's mind, yet the whole is so true, so eloquent, and so vivid, that the effect produced could not be surpassed. How, after this annual holiday, the whole world, rich and poor, went home peaceably, restraining and controlling itself, and how next morning the House resumed its discussion, and all the means by which that discussion was led to take a turn unexpectedly favourable to Government, are set before the reader in detail. It is the history only of a Parliamentary debate; yet so perfectly is the underplay of motive and influence kept before us, and all the side lights thrown in, that no chapter in history could be more picturesque, and no drama more interesting. This is how it appears from an English point of view. From the French its effect was still more striking and noticeable. In every new trait of the freedom and force of English

political life, in every detail given and principle laid down, there is a subtle but most powerful contrast, at once melancholy and bitter, which is never absent from the writer's mind for a moment. "Thus England may do, but France must not," is the thread of thought which runs through everything. A secret protest against all that is most powerful in one country is involved in every line of this description of another.

The introduction strikes at once the key-note of this contrast :—

"There are ill-disposed minds for whom rest and silence are not the supreme good. There are people who feel from time to time a need of escaping from the tranquil uniformity of their ordinary life. There are soldiers who, vanquished, wounded, or enthralled, console and reanimate themselves by the sight of the struggles and perils of others. They are not attracted by the sad and base sentiment of serene egotism which Lucretius has depicted in his famous lines :—

'Suave, mari magno, turbantibus æquora ventis,
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem . . .
Suave etiam belli certamina magna tueri,
Per campos instructa, tua sine parte pericli.'

"No; theirs is a motive purer and more lofty: it is the sentiment of the disarmed athlete, who, anxious looker-on upon the arena which he enters no more in his own person, claps his hands at the exploits of happier rivals, and throws to the combatants a cry of generous sympathy, lost among, but not extinguished by, the generous clamour of the attentive crowd.

"I confess ingenuously that I am one of these; and I add, that for this malady, so little understood nowadays, I have found a remedy. When I feel myself vaguely overwhelmed by this malaria; when I feel my ears tingle, sometimes from the buzz of the chroniclers of the ante-chamber, sometimes from the commotion made by fanatics who believe themselves our masters, and by hypocrites who believe us their dupes; when I am stifled by the weight of an atmosphere charged with evil emanations (*chargée de miasmes serviles et corrupteurs*), I rush away to breathe a purer air, and to take a bath of life in free England."

This expression is used more than once in Montalembert's private letters. To "take a bath of life in England" was the greatest refreshment which remained to him. He adds that he would not stay there too long; but the

reassurance that freedom actually continued to exist somewhere, was necessary to the life of his soul.

He continues, however, with suppressed and contemptuous satire, which must have stung his adversaries to the quick :—

"I see at these words certain faces darken, and display all the repugnance entertained by sectaries of the present fashion for everything which seems like a recollection or a regret of political life. If, among those who have opened these pages, there are some who are ruled by that fashion, I say to them without disguise, Stop here ; go no further. Nothing that I am about to write will interest or please you. Go and ruminate in peace in the fat pastures of your blessed quiet, and do not grudge to those who grudge you nothing, the right of resting faithful to their past, to the needs of the mind, to the aspirations of liberty. Let each take his pleasure as he finds it. We come to the point, not of understanding each other indeed, but of ending all disputation, when we allow that we have neither ambition nor affection in common, and when it is certain that we do not think alike either in respect to happiness or to honour.

"I allow, besides, that nothing, absolutely nothing, in the political institutions or personages of France, resembles the things and the men of whom I mean to give a rapid sketch. It is unnecessary to say that I do not in any way expect to convert those progressive intellects which regard Parliamentary institutions as advantageously replaced by universal suffrage, nor those political optimists who profess to believe that the supreme victory of democracy consists in abdicating in favour of a monarch the exclusive direction of the internal and external affairs of the country. I write for my own satisfaction, and for that of a limited number of invalids, of curious persons, of maniacs if you will, like myself. I study contemporary institutions which are not ours, but which once were ours, and which still seem to my old-fashioned mind worthy of admiration and envy. The attentive sympathy which superior talent has been able to awaken for the beauties of the Fronde, for the doubtful personages of the great revolution in England, or for the obscure and unproductive agitations of our ancient communes, may it not also be appealed to for the deeds and words of a nation which lives and labours in full force and greatness within seven leagues of our northern coasts? I think it may. I think that

this investigation into foreign statistics, or, to use a better expression, into contemporary archæology, may charm our leisure at least as much as a commentary on the comedies of Plautus, or the narrative of an expedition to the sources of the Nile."

Such a preamble was not likely to please the reigning powers in France, and what followed was still more disagreeable to them. The contrast between the two nations was carried on with a closeness and keenness which proves how difficult, under the most favourable circumstances, it must be to silence altogether a man of genius, and debar him from the use of those subtle and keen-edged weapons which he has always at command. We quote some of the other passages specially selected for censure in France, in order that the reader may understand the famous political trial which did so little good to the Empire, and which set Montalembert forth upon a pedestal to the gaze and to the admiration of all the world. He is speaking of the action of England and English freedom upon the colonies which she had established. "She has created the United States," he says, "and now is in the act of erecting in Australia a new United States, which soon will detach

themselves in their turn from the maternal stem to become a great nation, imbued from the cradle with the masculine virtues and glorious liberties which are everywhere the inheritance of the Anglo-Saxon race."

He then goes on to plant his sting in a joint of his adversary's armour :—

"In Canada a noble race of Frenchmen and Catholics, unhappily torn from our country, but remaining French in heart and habits, owes to England the privilege of having retained or acquired, along with perfect religious freedom, all the political and municipal liberties which France herself has repudiated."

The following indicates one of the reasons why English habits are so much misunderstood in France :—

"We have not only the habits but also the instincts of those nations, wise and moderate, but always in their minority (*eternellement mineurs*), who sometimes permit themselves frightful outbreaks, but who fall back immediately into civic impotence, in which no one speaks but by order or by permission, with the salutary terror of a warning from the

higher powers (*un avertissement d'en haut*) should they ever have the temerity to go against the ideas of authority or those of the crowd."

Another utterance offensive to the French authorities comes after a description of various articles in the English newspapers, commenting upon the debate on Indian affairs, which is the subject of his essay :—

"How much wit and knowledge, how much irony and passion, how much talent and life, were lavished during these fifteen days in the vast columns of the English journals! I was, for my part, completely overwhelmed by them, having already lost acquaintance with that rolling fire of daily discussion which we once knew and practised perhaps with excess, but which has become impossible with a press, of which some members only have the right to speak out —a right which leads them more or less involuntarily to draw their less privileged adversaries upon ground where the official gag awaits them."

And again, after the conclusion of the debate, Montalembert expresses himself as follows :—

"In a word, moral force had been nobly and openly preferred to material force by the organs of a great nation, which could and would manage her affairs herself; which nothing beat down or frightened; which deceived herself sometimes, but never pushed either men or things to extremity; and, in short, which was capable of arranging and remedying everything without requiring to put herself in a state of pupilage, or to seek help anywhere outside of her own manful and intelligent energy. While such reflections were made around me, I left this great spectacle, touched and satisfied as every man ought to be, who sees in a government something else than an ante-chamber, and in a civilised nation something more than a docile flock, indolently ready to be shorn, and to be led to pasture under the silent shades of enervating security. I felt myself more than ever attached to the liberal convictions and hopes which have always animated, through the most melancholy episodes of our history, that chosen band of honest men whom deceits and defeats have never overthrown, and who even in exile, even on the scaffold, have preserved enough of patriotism to believe that France was capable, as well as England, of enjoying the reign of law, of light, and of free-

dom. Noble belief, worthy of inspiring the most painful sacrifices, and which, though betrayed by fortune, deserted by the crowd, and insulted by cowards, does not the less preserve an unshaken empire over generous and noble souls!"

The last passage specially referred to in the indictment is as follows :—

"I have already indicated here, and I hail once again with delight, the most significant and consolatory symptom of the condition of England. It is the persevering ardour with which the *élite* of the nation pursue social and administrative reform, and endeavour to improve the state of prisons, of dwelling-houses, to extend popular, professional, agricultural, and domestic instruction, to augment the resources of religion, to simplify the criminal and civil processes of law, and to seek in everything the moral and material wellbeing of the poor, *not under the humiliating direction of an uncontrolled power*, but by the generous coalition of free forces and spontaneous sacrifices."

We quote these passages less for their direct interest to ourselves than for their bearing upon

the curious incident which followed. Other extracts might be made, more delightful to the English reader—as, for instance, the spirited and fine description of the "Derby," which is one of the most picturesque representations ever given of that great national ceremonial, and full of brightness and sympathetic feeling. The entire article was republished in the 'Times,' occupying one whole vast page, very closely printed, of five or six numbers of that paper, in which for almost as many days there did not fail a leading article on the same interesting subject, in which M. de Montalembert was treated with a profound courtesy and warm appreciation, very different from the comments made upon him and his conduct half-a-dozen years previously. The 'Times' describes the article, and with justice, as a piece of splendid oratory rather than of writing. It is the utterance of a great speaker, addressing face to face the audience which hangs upon his words, moving it to laughter, to indignation, to sympathy, and to tears. Its effect in England was electrical. In France it must have been so great as to have alarmed the higher powers. We have no means of procuring French authorities on this subject; for even the ordinary report of the trial was not allowed to appear in the

French papers, and the 'Times' and other English papers containing it were stopped in the French Post-Office. Nor can we vouch for the truth of an assertion made by the 'Times,' that the Emperor himself was unwilling to prosecute, and only yielded to the importunity of some of his less wise friends. As it was, however, the prosecution followed the publication in a month; the article was published in the 'Correspondant' of the 25th October 1858; and on the 24th of November the decision of the Court of Police Correctionelle was given. In the interval we may be permitted to quote an extract from one of the letters of Lacordaire, which gives an interesting view of the manner in which the enlightened Roman Catholic priesthood of the highest class regard our country. From the tone of the letter it is apparent that Montalembert had sent to his friend the proof-sheets of the article, with some doubts whether it might please him. Unfortunately, Lacordaire had a habit of destroying all the letters he received, which makes it only possible to guess at the purport of this one from the reply.

"My dear Friend,—I have just read attentively, and with all the interest it deserves, your work upon 'Un Débat sur l'Inde au Parle-

ment Anglais.' Not to speak of its style—which is animated, eloquent, and *spirituel*—it seems to me most judiciously conceived (*sainement pensé*). Your *résumé* of opinion upon the English cruelties during the Indian war is energetic; the same thing may be said in regard to the politics of Lord Palmerston; and, in short, you do not conceal those defects of the English character which make them so little loved by the people of the East—or indeed of the West. In all this there is nothing which can wound me personally. The English career in India has been most courageously defended in arms, but dishonoured by vengeance. It has been at once good and bad. Against the esteem due to the customs, institutions, public spirit, liberties, and progressive tendencies of England, I have nothing to say; my sentiments are the same as your own. To do justice to a Protestant nation is not to injure the Church. We render justice to ancient Greece and Rome, and we owe it still more to a people which has been Catholic, the laws and traditions of which have been formed under the influence of the Church, and which, notwithstanding its schismatical defection, has retained more remains of its ancient faith than any other separated people. No other Protestant nation—neither Prussia, Sweden, nor Den-

mark—nor yet any of the Greek communities —contains the elements of restoration which show themselves in England; and to attack her as we see done,* instead of encouraging her in well-doing, is an impolitic stupidity as well as a moral injustice. England ought to be important to us, not only for her liberty, but because of the religion existing in her; and if she is destined to great misfortunes, they will not be for her ruin, but for her resurrection, as 1789 and 1793 have not been for the loss of France, but for her expiation and regeneration. Your work is not inopportune, but on the contrary profoundly (*souverainement*) well timed; and as for the clamour that may rise among the clergy, nothing can be more unimportant (*c'est la chose la plus indifferente du monde*). The clergy should be cared for (*servi*), but not flattered in its false tendencies. I am persuaded, besides, that there are many of its members who are capable of appreciating your views, and many others who are not incapable of attaining to them. The 'Correspondant' itself is a protest against the erroneous ways into which some Catholics have strayed; and this protest ought

* Lacordaire refers to the attacks made by the so-called religious journals, and wishes England to be "encouraged in well-doing," not by France, but by the Church.

to extend to all questions, social, political, literary, and scientific, which events may raise around us. We have no popularity to preserve or to attain. We seek only the credit of keeping foremost in the path of equity, honest foresight, and Christian good taste. Nothing else has any value for us."

By this letter it would appear that Montalembert and his friends feared rather the rabid strictures and narrow bigotry of the 'Univers' and its party—a party assailed with no uncertain sound in the article referred to—than any interference of the temporal power. However, the temporal power did not keep the writer long in suspense. On the 24th November, he and the publisher of the 'Correspondant,' M. Douniol, were placed at the bar together, charged with very grave offences. Even then the trial had been postponed to suit M. Berryer —the great Legitimist lawyer, most eloquent of advocates, the father of the French bar, and one of the men most highly respected in France—who was to defend his former Parliamentary colleague and old friend. The indictment under which they were charged was framed on the following very serious counts. The Count de Montalembert and M. Douniol were accused—

1st, Of an attack against universal suffrage, and against the rights and the authority which the Emperor derives from the Constitution.

2d, Of an attack against the respect due to the laws.

3d, Of having excited the people to hate and despise the government of the Emperor.

4th, Of having attempted to disturb the public peace by exciting citizens to hatred and contempt of each other.

The penalties attached to these accusations were serious: not only were the culprits, if convicted, liable to sentences of imprisonment varying from three months to five years, and to fines varying from 500 to 6000 francs, but they were subject to a lasting surveillance after, and —in addition to the immediate penalty—might be either expelled from French territory altogether, or shut up (*interné*) in some French or Algerian town. The trial was therefore no child's-play to M. de Montalembert.

The Court was crowded with the best and highest audience that Paris could collect together. To hear the first of French lawyers plead, and one of the most illustrious of French orators submit to an examination, was enough to attract a crowd anywhere; and the benches

were all packed, and every seat occupied, long before the hour of the trial. It was the centre to which all the thoughts of Paris and all its interest tended; and yet, though so many people were inevitably allowed to hear and see, nobody was allowed to read. The mouth of the press was stopped; and except in the reports published in England, it is impossible now to find any record of this curious trial. We take the report of the 'Times,' as at once the most concise and trustworthy, premising once more that we are not responsible for the English, which is the reporter's, not ours:—

"M. de Montalembert was examined as to the meaning of the passages alleged as libellous. He was asked whether he did not mean to describe the Imperial Government by the words, 'the chroniclers of ante-chambers, the atmosphere charged with servile and corrupt *miasmes;*' and whether he did not imply, by saying that he went 'to breathe an air more pure, to take a bath of life in free England,' an attack upon the institutions of his own country? M. de Montalembert said he meant no attack in the sense implied by the law; he merely stated certain facts, and only by misinterpretation could such a meaning be attached to them.

"He was then asked whether in the passage where he said that 'he did not intend to attack those progressive spirits who regard Parliamentary government as advantageously replaced by universal suffrage, nor the political optimists who profess that the supreme victory of democracy consists in abdicating into the hands of a monarch the exclusive dominion of the country's foreign and domestic affairs?' and that 'he wrote for his own satisfaction, and that of a small number of invalids, of maniacs if you will,'—he did not mean an attack on universal suffrage, and on the rights which the Emperor derived from the Constitution? M. de Montalembert declared that his meaning was quite clear; that he meant only what he said; that he did not wish to convert 'men of progress' who differed from him. He merely stated a fact, and nothing more.

"He was asked whether he did not mean to affirm that France had lost her freedom when he said that 'in Canada a noble French and Catholic race of people, unfortunately torn from our country, but remaining French in heart and in manners, owes to England the preservation or the acquisition, with entire religious liberty, of all the political and municipal liberties which France has repudiated'? He said he simply

stated a historical fact with which every one was acquainted, and which no one could deny. There could be no doubt that when the colony belonged to France, France did possess certain political and municipal institutions which she possesses no longer, but which are still retained in Canada. Surely there was no attack on the Imperial Government in saying that it was France herself who had repudiated these institutions.

"He was asked whether he did not intend an attack on the laws by saying, 'We have not only the habits but also the instincts of those wise and prudent people who are eternally minors; who permit themselves occasionally frightful irregularities, but who fall again into civil impotence, in which no one speaks but by permission, with the salutary terror of an *avertissement* if he venture ever so little to censure the ideas of Government or of the mob'? He said that he simply stated the fact that *avertissements* were given by authority in the cases alluded to. He was asked a few more questions to the same purport, and then was allowed to resume his seat."

No one who has ever seen M. de Montalembert can have any difficulty in representing

to himself the curiously significant position in which the foolish malice of his prosecutors thus placed him. With his imperturbable composure, that "aristocratic calm" which his critics had so often remarked, he stood before all Paris with the curl of sarcasm about his lips, enjoying, there can be no doubt, to the bottom of his heart, this unlooked-for chance of adding a double point to every arrow he had launched, and planting his darts deliberately and effectually in the joints of his adversaries' armour. The calm gravity with which he acknowledges each damning implication as an historical fact not to be denied—the serious and suave composure of his aspect—the irresistible and undeniable force of that polished reiteration—the ironical disavowal of any attack "in the sense implied by the law,"—all make up the most characteristic picture which could possibly be given of the man. The humour of the situation is just of that intense and subtle kind which suited his intellect, and the touch of danger involved only added zest to the keen pleasure of political revenge. Had the choice been given him of all the means possible of striking one great blow for freedom, and avenging himself of all the wrongs the Empire had done to him and to France, we doubt whether

anything more satisfactory or effectual could have been found. When he calmly repeated his most moderate and gentle explanation, "I have merely stated a fact—*avertissements* are given; France *did* possess certain institutions which she possesses no longer,"—it is impossible not to add in imagination the gleam of the eye, the movement of the calm lip, the sense of power with which this seeming innocent response was given. He was on ground which was absolutely unassailable. He might be accused of evil intention, as he was; but nobody could contradict or throw doubt upon the "facts" which he stated with such composure. The Emperor and his Government manufactured for Montalembert this platform from which, with double publicity, force, and intenseness, he could state these facts to all the world. The situation is unique: it was the most impotent demonstration of power, the most triumphant victory of the individual, the man of genius, the voice and pen, which has occurred in this eventful age.

The Procureur-Imperial conducted the prosecution, and the distinguished and eloquent M. Berryer made a speech of two hours' duration for the defence. This speech was little more than a sketch of the worth and honourable life of his illustrious client. It was inter-

rupted by many outbursts of applause, which were summarily checked. As to the decision, of course, there could be no doubt. The defendants were found guilty upon the three first counts of the indictment—that is, of having, 1st, "excited to hate and contempt of the Imperial Government;" having made, 2d, an "attack upon the respect due to the laws;" and 3d, having attacked "the right and authority of the Emperor, and the principle of universal suffrage." The 4th count, that of having "endeavoured to disturb the public peace by exciting citizens to hatred and contempt of each other," was dropped. The verdict of the Court describes the whole article upon which the prosecution was founded "as written in a systematic spirit of disparagement. The author," it continues, "by the continual contrast which he chooses to draw between the institutions of France and those of a power in alliance with France, takes pains to pour out irony and insult on the political laws, the men and acts of the Government." The sentence was: six months of imprisonment, and a fine of three thousand francs, for Count de Montalembert; one month's imprisonment, and a thousand francs of fine, for M. Douniol, the publisher of the 'Correspondant.' Oddly enough, this sentence was given

according to the regulations of the law made in July 1849, to restrain the licence of the press, which Montalembert, departing in this one particular from all the traditions of his life, had supported, and to which he had given the whole weight of his influence.

The sentence, however, was followed by no immediate enforcement of the penalty. Montalembert left the Court quietly on foot, a group of people momentarily assembling in the street to gaze at him. He appealed at once, as he had a right, to the superior court. Before the time for the appeal was completed, the Emperor made an effort to reclaim the ground which had been lost by fully remitting the sentence, "on the occasion of the anniversary of the 2d December." The culprit, however, had no mind to accept the grace thus awarded to him; and on the same day he addressed the following letter to the 'Moniteur':—

"Paris, 2*d December* 1858.

"Monsieur le Redacteur,—The 'Moniteur' of this morning contains in its non-official part a piece of news which I learned only in reading it. It is expressed as follows:—

"'His Majesty the Emperor, on the occasion of the 2d December, remits to M. le Comte de

Montalembert the sentence pronounced against him.'

"Condemned on the 24th November, I had already appealed against the sentence.

"No power in France up to the present moment has any right to remit a penalty not yet definitively pronounced.

"I am one of those who still believe in justice, and who do not accept mercy.

"I beg you, and, if necessary, I require you, to publish this letter in your next number.

"Accept the assurance of my consideration.

"CH. DE MONTALEMBERT."

The superior court decided the appeal on the 21st December. It repeated the previous condemnation pronounced by the inferior tribunal, characterising the article as full of proofs of bitterness and an unfriendly spirit—an attempt to lessen the consideration in which France was held; but reduced the sentence from six to three months' imprisonment. The Emperor, however, a few days later repeated his act of grace, and remitted all the penalties of Montalembert. M. Douniol had his fine of one thousand francs to pay, and thus the whole business ended. It was one of the foolish steps which disturbed the usual good sense of

most of the Emperor's conduct at this early portion of his reign; and certainly he lost a great deal more by it than could be made up by M. Douniol's forty pounds.

The seriousness, however, which was attached to this judgment, not for its immediate consequences, but for the possibilities which it held over the head of the accused,—possibilities to which we have already referred, of banishment or confinement,—will be seen from the following letter, written in haste and anxiety to his friend by Lacordaire:—

"Soreze, 26*th November* 1858.

"My dear Friend,—I have just learned from the 'Journal de Toulouse' your condemnation to six months' imprisonment, and a fine of three thousand francs. This condemnation, bad enough in itself, puts you under the power of the *loi des suspects*, which was enacted in the beginning of the present year; and it seems to me, on thinking over all the circumstances, that it would be well for you, after appealing against the sentence, to retire into some other country, either Belgium or England. In either of these lands you would enjoy perfect security, while here you would be at the mercy of a legislation which might send you anywhere, except to the

scaffold. It is no doubt a great sacrifice to leave one's country; but there are occasions when this sacrifice becomes an honour. You have given up your life to the establishment in France of an honest and lawful freedom. You have obtained for us one liberty, which has not yet perished — the liberty of teaching and of education. What then remains to you but to suffer for this cause, which already owes you so much, and to which also you owe your greatness, civil and religious. You will be counted among the very small number of the honourable men of this time who have sacrificed something to the convictions of their life and the cause of justice. God alone knows if we shall ever see better days, and if France is worthy of gaining back in our time the institutions which her own faults have lost to her. But whatever may happen while we live, the future will brighten over our graves. It will find us pure from all treason and defection, from the adulation of success, and constant in our hope for a state of affairs both in religion and politics which shall be worthy of that Christianity whose children we are. We have disdained to seek for our faith the support of despotism, wherever it may reign. We have sought its triumph only by the means employed by the apostles and

martyrs; and if it is to triumph in this world, which is given up to so many disorders of heart and mind, it will be solely by those means which gave it the empire over paganism, and which have secured it up to the present time from the hateful conspiracies of false philosophy and false politics.

"Here, my dear friend, is our consolation, and yours in particular. Nothing great was ever exempt from some sensible sign of the cross; the suffering which saved the world is the immortal consecration of all true greatness. You are already touched in your health, and you are about to be so in your safety. In short, you have no longer a country; for that is no country for a man where he is at the mercy of an administration, the very laws of which sanction its arbitrary action. He is already as good as exiled, who may be exiled any day at the will of the head of the police; he is banished, who may be so any morning by the decision of a man without judgment, or cause to exercise his judgment upon. Except under Robespierre" (*and Napoleon I.*, Count de Montalembert has added), "there has been no such position of affairs. You are the honourable victim of it. God, who has given you the love of justice, the sentiment of civil duty, and the still higher com-

prehension of all liberties, human and divine,— God, I say, will give you strength according to your need, to endure so many mental evils as well as so many sufferings of the body. I beg of you, above all, not to be bitter against your fate : calm and gentleness are the ornaments of suffering. These are what made Jesus Christ so wonderful upon the cross. The greatest men and the greatest saints have shared this character of submission under trials, and of empire over their misfortunes.

"There can be no doubt that your article was a protest against the moral degradation of our country,— a degradation which is always the first punishment of those who are the cause of it. But this protest exceeded only in a small degree the measure of complaint which an intelligent tyranny permits to the dissatisfied. The absolute silence of thirty-four millions of men is always a reproach in itself; and by speaking as you have done, you make it apparent that some one still ventures to think in France. . . . I could not have written as you have done, because I am not a political man, and my duties are, above all, religious; but a layman, a former peer of France, might without derogation have given a still sharper edge to his pen.

"Adieu, my dear friend. Send me word as soon as possible what you decide to do; and wherever you may go, be sure that I will follow you with a faithful heart, and much regret to have no power to ameliorate your fate.

"FRERE HENRI DOMINIC LACORDAIRE,
des Frs. Prêcheurs."

This letter, which in its solemnity almost resembles a leave-taking, did not, fortunately, influence the steady mind of Montalembert. He did not leave upon France the everlasting stigma of having driven one of her noblest sons out of her bosom; and there is no evidence that he ever felt any necessity to justify or excuse himself for what he had done. He made no change in his life in consequence of the impotent sentence or the foolish trial, which had only improved his opportunity of speaking out, and given all the charm of exquisite irony to his graver utterances. He went proudly and quietly upon his habitual way, taking no thought of any further penalties which might be brought upon him. Indeed, we believe he was perfectly safe from the first, and must have felt himself so. No government would have dared to banish such a man; and, to do the Emperor justice, we do not think that he ever

showed any inclination to push prosecution into persecution in such a way.

We may add here one or two extracts from various letters, showing—with all the impetuosity natural to his style and mode of expressing himself—how profoundly the indignation of a man who has been deceived in his estimate of another's character affected his feelings towards the Emperor; and how deep was his loathing for the Imperial system:—

"La Roche, 20*th January* 1860.

"My return to England is, I am afraid, not very likely, considering the (to me) most disgusting attitude which the whole English nation has once more assumed towards the French Emperor. Sorry I am to see that you yourself, my dear friend, have not been preserved, by your chivalrous and Catholic feelings, from the Palmerstonian contagion. You are quite mistaken when you suppose that I am guided in my estimates of the third Nap by any *Bourbonic* feeling. I am personally fond of the Orleans princes, but I have no sort of faith or confidence in any dynasty, or any royalty, past, present, or future. I only love, revere, and desire in the government of this world three things independent of every

person—Justice, Freedom, and Honour. These three things are directly antipathetic to Napoleon III., as they were to Napoleon I. The nephew is just like his uncle in this respect. He is certainly not such a sanguinary monster, but he is neither an honest man nor a gentleman. He may be, as you style him, a wonderful politician, if, as is unfortunately the case, enormous lying is one of the principal qualities of great politicians. I also know that many have looked on him as the great vindicator of Catholic rights; but even before his recent conduct towards the Pope, I confess I never could admit that perjury, spoliation, and political hypocrisy can entitle any man or any prince to the esteem or confidence of those Catholics who have not given up their claim to be looked upon as honest men. Besides, I hate Cæsarism; and, on the whole, after having had a sample of both, I am convinced that Socialism, although more disagreeable, is less dishonourable, both for Church and State."

The curiously French view of various political questions is reason enough for adding the following, notwithstanding the similarity of its expressions in respect to Napoleon III.:—

"PARIS, *October* 9, 1867.

"Nothing astonishes me more than your opinions on him whom you call the great Emperor. You are certainly the first man whom I have met with in my life, either Catholic or Protestant, French or foreign, to whom he has inspired a feeling of esteem, which of all feelings is the one, I suppose, which he cares least about. The base treachery with which he and he alone has destroyed the temporal power of the Pope will sufficiently stamp his moral character on the judgment of history; while, by the creation of United Italy and United Germany, he has shown the worthlessness of his policy, and destroyed that relative greatness of France which he had received from the hands of the house of Bourbon, and from the Republic. But what is worse than all that, he has debased the moral character of the nation, and under the hollow covering of the material improvements which you signalise, he has destroyed every principle and every habit of Conservative resistance. This will become evident in the next revolution, when, instead of the Conservative reaction getting immediately the upper hand, as was the case in 1830 and 1848, France will become a lasting prey to the atheistical and Jacobinical party, which has

been fomented in every village by the Imperial administration. This you will perhaps see, my dear friend; I trust I shall not, as having lived for sixteen years under the rule of Napoleon III. has utterly disgusted me with this world and everything in it."

In 1861 Montalembert made a journey into Hungary, where he was received with extraordinary manifestations; and into Poland, where his imagination and heart were deeply struck by the spectacle of the "nation in mourning," which he afterwards celebrated in some of his most characteristic pages. In Hungary he was received with almost royal honours, especially by the higher classes of that proud and independent nation. After his death a large collection of materials for a work upon this most interesting country was found arranged and in order; but time had failed him to carry his intention out, and the following trifling and playful notice of an amusing detail which had caught his eye, given in a letter to his daughter, is all we have met with in respect to this journey:—

"Hanover, 20*th July* 1861.

"For my part, Hungary seems to me the most curious and amusing country in the world,

if it were for nothing but the costumes. The very acolytes (*enfants de chœur*) serve the mass in hussar boots with spurs, which ring upon the pavement of the church as they carry back the sacred vessels to the sacristy. But I have been much more touched in Poland, where I have had the spectacle of an entire nation in mourning for its lost liberty, with an unconquerable perseverance and resolution, but also with a piety and faith much different from those of the Hungarians. I have also been very glad to see again the northern part of Germany, and to visit minutely many towns and abbeys which I scarcely knew. I like the Germans, though they have the baseness to hang the portrait of the first Napoleon everywhere. My travelling companion, however, is a young Pole, who detests them, and abuses them all day long. A German, according to him, is but another word for a devil. It is true that Germany has been anything but friendly to Poland, and that she deserves to be heavily punished."

The 'Nation en Deuil,' which was the production of this journey, is a poem rather than an article. It was published in the 'Correspondant,' which had at this time the honour of being the vehicle of most of Montalembert's

publications; but its lofty poetic strain, its touching and highly coloured pictures, its lyrical outbursts of translated song, mark its true character even more clearly than versification could have done. Poland had been the first object of Montalembert's interest. She had always kept a foremost place in his affections; and the aspect of this mourning nation, in which, perhaps, a commonplace observer might have found something of the histrionic mingled with the real, awoke in his mind, so full of generous sympathy, nothing but the profoundest emotion. Her piety, her struggles for national existence, her long and heroic perseverance, and her many misfortunes, roused Montalembert into a very passion of pity and sympathy. It is but another instance of the unity of his mind and the tenacity of his affections, that the country which had interested him so deeply in the beginning of his career should thus continue to retain so strong a hold upon him to its very end.

In the following year he paid another visit to England, proceeding this time to Scotland, and as far as the distant Western Isles. This journey had a purpose. He was bent upon visiting the sites of all the great old monastic foundations in the three kingdoms, being now engaged upon his great work, 'The Monks of

the West.' The results of these travels are apparent enough in the book, which is the greatest monument of his literary genius. Nobody who has read it will soon forget his striking, but somewhat conventional, picture of the Hebrides, "placed far amid the melancholy main." We say somewhat conventional; for it is painted in the true spirit of a southern visitor, from a palette laden with grey and leaden tones, and with too persistent a determination to find the landscape sad, gloomy, and mournful. To be sure it was in a gloomy year, and in the midst of very bad and rainy weather, that he visited these coasts; but he ignores in a determined manner all possibility of brightness with a truly theoretical adherence to that ideal of what the landscape ought to be, which so often characterises travellers. "We have never had a fine day since that sunny morning at St Andrews, where I learnt to know what *golf* was," he wrote from Oban to Mr Blackwood, whose guest he had been at the former lively and pleasant place. "Mr E.," he adds, "offered us a day or two's deer-stalking in the fogs and swamps of his mountains, which I carefully declined." It was not the sort of entertainment congenial to his mind. Yet it is surprising that so keen an observer, and so

sympathetic a traveller, should have brought away from the Highlands nothing but impressions of gloom. To be sure there was nothing in the moral aspect of the country to attract him. The ancient faith had passed away too completely, and its very remains were too hopelessly separated from the actual existence of the people, to rouse him to any warm feeling for the Scottish race. And that chill shadow came between him and the landscape, investing Columba's country with all the mournful characteristics of a spiritual tomb. Ireland, always congenial, gained naturally a warmer appreciation.

His companion on this journey was the late Lord Dunraven, to whom he playfully writes that he will make him "quartermaster" for the journey, reserving to himself the privilege of censure and abandonment after it is ended —the treatment which had been applied by the English journals to General Airey. The following note shows how he meant, and how he did not mean, to occupy the few days which he had to spend in London :—

"Paris, *June* 4, 1862.

"On my arrival in England, I must go and spend a day or two at Orleans House. Ten days in London will, I apprehend, be quite

enough for me. I do not much care for the Exhibitions, but I want to get up a little reading about English and Scotch history and archæology before setting out on our tour. The library of the Athenæum I have singled out for my special resort during my stay in London, and therefore I hope you will be able to get me admitted there—le jour même de mon arrivée. . . . Above all things, preserve me, my dear friend, from any invitations to public meetings and speechifying, which I considerably fear, as Lady G. Fullerton, Monsell, and Canon Oakley have all three been firing off proposals of this nature—to all of which I answer like the Pope—'Non debbo, non posso, e non voglio.'"

The following letter, addressed to one of his daughters, shows his favourable opinion of one direction of English energy at the moment, and proves how easy it is for a stranger to exceed in admiration, as well as sometimes in disapproval, the soberer level of home opinion; though perhaps in 1862 we also were more confident of the powers of our gallant Volunteers:—

"London, 20*th July* 1862.

"Dearest C.,—I write to you on my last evening in London,—the only one for a fort-

night that I have not dined out, and that accidentally. I have had time to make some researches in the fine library of the Athenæum—from whence I write—for the archæological and picturesque journey which I begin to-morrow with Lord Dunraven. My fortnight in London has been wonderfully full. The best thing I have seen has been the great review of Volunteers, who have formed themselves spontaneously to defend the country against the possible invasion of some Napoleon or other (*d'un Napoléon quelconque*). There are a hundred and sixty-one thousand, of whom we saw a superb specimen a week ago. It is impossible to imagine finer men, or a more martial aspect, than that of those clerks and townsmen (*bourgeois*) of London and its neighbourhood. They are not like the National Guard, who had to be forced to march in the name of the law, and by the threat of a prison. Here everything goes on of itself (*ici tout va seul*). Each acts spontaneously, and the Government does nothing but look on and give its thanks. The Volunteers are organised by corporations or associations, with young *lords* for chiefs, when they can find them. The review was preceded by a shooting match between eleven peers and eleven commoners, all young and likely men. The

lords gained, and everybody applauded. The battalion of barristers was the finest of all, to the great surprise of B——. He has amused me much during all my residence in London by the *naïveté* and justice of his observations. 'These *mâtins* of English,' he says, 'one sees that it would not be so easy after all to settle their business (*en venir à bout*); and that it would not be enough, as we think, to throw 50,000 men on the coast of England to bring them to their senses.' He admires the English women, however, even more than the men. When I took him to the Exhibition to show him the pictures and statues of the English school, he said to me, 'I prefer to look at the living statues who are walking about everywhere.' The Exhibition is very fine and curious. I met yesterday the amiable Princess Clementina of Orleans. I dined *en famille* with them (the Orleans Princes) on the day of their reunion. . . . This, however, does not console me for the fact that *Providence has thought fit to grant another male to the frightful race of Napoleons.*"

Three years later he made a similar excursion into Spain, to visit in the same way the monastic foundations, which also figure in his

great book. The following letter, though perhaps less characteristic than most, gives a picturesque and amusing picture of some of his labours and perils. It must be remarked that he had already suffered several serious attacks of his fatal disease before he encountered these fatigues. But his courage and spirit were unbroken, and all his heart and energy were given to the beloved and final work, in the midst of which, alas! leaving it uncompleted, his life was to end.

"Presbytère de Santa Cruz de la Serras,
near Tacca, 8*th October* 1865.

"Dearest M.,—I have so often thought of you since I have been in Spain, and of the mad delight you would have felt had you encountered all the adventures I have passed through, that it is natural I should address to you my first letter from this extraordinary country. I write to you from the house of an excellent curé, who has hospitably taken us in, in a village which we have reached by roads like broken staircases, the most dangerous and impassable in the world, like all Spanish roads. . . . Here are some arm-chairs in old leather, with enormous round nails, and a guitar; no glass in the windows, which are closed only by shut-

ters, and no fireplace, notwithstanding the keen cold. As soon as we came into the house we were served with exquisite chocolate, and the servant of the curé is now busy roasting the partridges which he shot this morning in our honour. To-morrow we remount our mules at four o'clock in the morning, in order to profit by the moonlight, for it is quite dark at six in the evening. But what would you have said, my dear girl, of our yesterday's journey? We left the interesting town of Oloroa at four o'clock in the morning, bidding farewell to the delicious valleys of Bearne, . . . and at Urdos took up our Spanish equipage. Imagine M. P—— dressed in grey, with wide breeches and gaiters to the knee, myself in my ordinary dress, Antoine —— and his Basque servant, a most intelligent and handy fellow, and a guide who was in a manner forced upon us—all mounted upon mules with indescribable saddles, with *bâts*, coverings, and decorations of all colours, escorted by three Aragonese muleteers, their heads covered with handkerchiefs, with blue coats and breeches open at the knee, showing the white drawers, and decorated with two ranges of coral buttons, with green tassels—then brown gaiters, and a very large sash in scarlet or crimson to set off everything—in

short, a costume fit for a fancy-dress ball; add that the muleteers all march, like Basques as they are, singing incessantly, and uniting their voices from the head of the procession to its end. . . . Thus equipped, we reached the pass of Canfranc, which is 6760 feet above the level of the sea, much higher than your dear Righi, and much more original. The defile is very grand, but frightfully desolate, and the desolation increased as we advanced into Spain, where everything bears an impression of ruin and destruction, depopulation and solitude. . . . When we reached the foot of the mountain we had a hospitable and gracious reception from a commercial agent (which is the *style élégant* for a dealer in contraband goods). This gentleman is also an agriculturist, and has five thousand sheep which he feeds on the great commons of these mountains. These five thousand sheep are kept by ten shepherds in the summer, and twenty-four in winter. The ewes produce 3 kilogrammes (about 6 pounds) of wool every year, and each ram 5 kilogrammes. This wool, which is the finest merino, is sold for 25 francs the 12 kilogrammes, which is only a franc the pound; while we sell ours for 2 francs. This is for Silvain, and I charge you particularly to tell

him. After our meal at Canfranc, deceived by false directions (which are habitual in Spain), we made up our minds to push on to Tacca; but soon the night fell upon us, a night moonless and starless, and we had to ride on for five hours along indescribable roads—sometimes in the beds of rivers, where there were more rocks than water—sometimes along the edge of frightful precipices, the depth of which we could form some idea of by the distant roar of the torrents which rushed down their sides. During the two last hours of this lamentable journey, a tempest of rain came on and drenched us; however, we got through it all, trusting to God and to our mules. These irreproachable animals find their way better by night than by day. Mine never stumbled once during the twelve hours' journey, which I bore perfectly well, and during which everybody admired my intrepidity, notwithstanding your impertinent jokes about my seat on horseback! . . . I will say nothing about the marvellous monastery of S. Juan de la Peña, as it will be fully described in the seventh volume of the 'Monks of the West.' . . . To avoid a nocturnal journey like that of yesterday, we have taken refuge with the above-mentioned curé, from whose house I write to you while waiting for supper. . . .

We speak Latin with the good curé, but what Latin! sprinkled with barbarisms and solecisms which would make the Abbé D—— shiver; while his old and toothless servant holds her sides with laughter at all the novelties she sees."

In this playful melange of misfortunes and privations, the reader will perceive that, even amid the desolation of the higher Pyrenees, the keen eyes of the traveller saw everything, and that even the sheep did not escape him. Silvain, to whom he sent this message, was his Intendant at that dear La Roche, which was to this Frenchman all that the most cherished "home" could be to an Englishman, the centre of all his domestic joys and thoughts.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HIS LITERARY WORK.

THE great work of Montalembert's life, the labours which occupied all its later part, which filled beneficially those silent years withdrawn from all the cares and excitements of public life, which would have been much less bearable without this occupation, was the 'History of the Monks of the West.' It is, in fact, a history of monastic institutions from their earliest commencement, with all the notable personages connected with them, and all the great events in which they were influential. The origin of this great work dates very far back in its author's history, to the time when he had completed his first beautiful study of religious life, the biography of *la chère Sainte Elisabeth.* Even before that period, from the moment when he turned aside with his friend Rio from the direct road between Rome and Naples, to visit

the great old Benedictine monastery which overlooks all the low-lying Pontine plains from the heights of Monte Cassino, vague projects not defined as yet, but attaching to the monastic orders as a centre, were floating through his mind. These consolidated into a design to form a companion volume to his S. Elizabeth, by writing the life of the great monk S. Bernard. "After having narrated," he himself tells us, in an introductory chapter to his great work, "the life of a young woman, in which the Catholic poetry of suffering and love was summed up, and whose modest and forgotten existence belonged to the most resplendent epoch of the middle ages, I had proposed to myself a task more difficult: I desired, by writing the life of a great monk, to contribute to the vindication of the monastic orders." To this work he devoted himself during the enforced but pleasant leisure of his retirement in Madeira, during the years 1842 and 1843, as the reader has already seen.

It was, however, necessary to the full comprehension of his subject, that it should be preceded by a historical introduction, like the graceful and interesting sketch which prefaced the life of St Elizabeth. He had carried with him to Madeira an entire library of books bear-

ing upon his subject, and among others the vast and painstaking Annals of the Benedictine Order, by Mabillon. Upon the foundation of this valuable book, and of the detailed and elaborate histories of the Acta Sanctorum, he founded a long and careful *résumé* of the history of the monastic orders, especially that of S. Benedict, not intended, however, to form an independent work, but only to act as an introduction to the life of S. Bernard. But the work expanded under his hands; and the introduction had swelled into material for two volumes, when, in 1847, he printed half of it, with the intention of publication. Before, however, it was given to the world, it was submitted by the author to the present Bishop of Orleans, then the Abbé Dupanloup, a most thoroughly qualified adviser. M. Dupanloup's opinion was, that the plan of the work should be enlarged, and that the introduction to the life of S. Bernard should be converted into a complete history of the monastic orders in the west. "M. de Montalembert," says M. Foisset, who is our authority for these details, "had the courage to suppress the volume already printed of his original work, and to undertake at once that of which he lived to complete only the first five volumes." The excitement of political life, the

events of 1848, and all the manifold occupations which filled his existence from that time until the end of his public career in France, retarded this vast enterprise. No one who has any knowledge of the immense labour required to form even a superficial acquaintance with the saintly lives of the middle ages, will doubt how great was the work thus undertaken. The mere composition of the book was the very smallest part of the labour necessary; and it was not until he was withdrawn perforce from the busy arena of public life, that he had leisure to give himself fully to this crowning task of his existence. Nor was the task rendered easier to him by the habit of rapid work to which the hurry of events, in our age, has trained many men. His mode of labour was always careful, lengthened, and elaborate. "His way of working," says his friend M. Cochin, speaking of the preparation of his speeches, "resembled, if I may be permitted so familiar an expression, a vintage. When he had sought out, carefully noted, detached, and accumulated an enormous quantity of facts, ideas, or information, as the vintager fills his baskets with innumerable bunches of grapes—then, furnished with this booty and the spoils of his researches, he arranged his materials in groups, and submitted them to a laborious pro-

cess of meditation, as to the wheel of a wine-press; and it was not until he had subjected his abundant harvest to this new process, that he allowed the generous wine of his eloquence to flow forth in rapid waves."

When his oratorical efforts required so much preparation, it may be imagined that purely literary work was for him more laborious still; and a work in which so many authorities had to be examined, compared, and collated, a yet more and more serious enterprise. The first two volumes of his great book were published in 1860. In these he described the origin of monasticism, the hermits of the desert, the first attempts at conventual life in Rome; and then, tracing those rills down into the wider stream of the Benedictine order, he showed how the impulse gained strength and gathered force from all sides, until it became one of the most potent influences in the medieval world. The gradual reconstruction of society after the downfall of the Roman Empire, and the partitioning, and settlement, and Christianising of Europe, in which the monks played so great a part, occupied all the ground; and already the endless nature of the work had revealed itself. It is exactly the kind of work, however, which the reader is content should be endless.

The variety of its episodes, its picturesque scenes and subjects, the wealth of perpetual illustration which so many primitive lives afford,—all lend themselves to the long drawing out of a history which has all the charm of legend, and much of the rhythmical effect of song.

In the year following their appearance in France, these two first volumes were translated and published in England, under the authority and with the revision of Count de Montalembert. His letters upon this subject, addressed to the publishers, Messrs Blackwood, and to the present writer, who undertook the translation, on the subject of this work, although too entirely occupied with one subject to interest the ordinary reader, contain some passages which are curious and characteristic. In the first of these, addressed to the Messrs Blackwood, he gives various reasons why it appeared to him possible that his work might not be so popular with an English as with his French audience.

"I am, as you are most likely well aware," he says, "a Catholic; and my book is a Catholic book. A Catholic editor [publisher] of London, who published, twenty years ago, a translation of my Life of St Elizabeth, has

offered to undertake the translation and publication of the 'Monks of the West.' But I confess that I should wish my book to obtain a more extensive circulation in your country than any Catholic editor * can obtain. And although I know but too well the extent and intensity of religious prejudices both in England and Scotland against 'benighted Papists' like me and my heroes, yet I cannot help supposing that a work written with the strictest impartiality, on one of the most important and interesting subjects of Christian history, and without any allusion to modern divisions between Catholics and Protestants, may meet amongst the English public with the same degree of attention and sympathy which the French Catholics have so amply and so constantly afforded to German Protestant historians, such as Ranke, Raumer, &c."

His wish to have an "editor" not exclusively connected with any party was fully carried out;

* This is one of the very few words which Montalembert used erroneously in English. Only one or two such errors are discoverable in his many English letters, or in the fluent and charming English which he spoke without the slightest accent. On one occasion, when seeing for the first time a lady with whom he had corresponded, he said, "I expected to find you much more *respectable*," meaning, of course, older. He also speaks, in a letter, of a friend who "is not of my *advise*,"—to wit, opinion, *avis*.

and his gratitude to Mr John Blackwood, who arranged everything for the publication with his usual ability and consideration, was most warmly and fully expressed. "Let me assure you that nothing that concerns you can be indifferent to me," he wrote to this gentleman before even he had made personal acquaintance with him; and he expresses over and over again his feeling that the interest taken by Mr Blackwood in his work was more that of a friend than of a publisher. We are sorry to add, to our personal humiliation, that Montalembert was by no means so much satisfied with at least the first part of the translation. He acknowledged that the meaning was faithfully rendered, "but," he wrote, "I cannot admire the constant use of French or Latin words instead of your own vernacular. My Anglo-Saxon feelings are wounded to the quick by the useless admission of the article *the* or *a;* and by such words as *chagrin* instead of *grief, malediction* instead of *curse,*" &c. The proofs of the translation came back from him laden with corrections in red ink—a circumstance which communicated to them a certain additional sharpness, at least to the troubled imagination of the translator; and the present writer may be perhaps allowed here to avow in her own

person, that up to this present moment, when she happens to have the smallest French phrase to translate, she pauses with instinctive alarm, hastily substituting *freedom* for *liberty* when the word occurs; and will cast about in her mind, with a certain sensation of fright, how to find words for *authority*, *corruption*, *intelligence*, &c., in other than the French form—so whimsically were her nerves affected by the most polished, courteous, and suave, yet pitiless objections of the author, to whose work, in a moment of languor and suffering, she had occupied herself in giving an English form.

In 1866 and 1867 the remaining volumes of the 'Monks of the West' were published. They contained the history of the first establishment of religion in Great Britain, primarily by the Celtic school of primitive apostles, and by Columba and his followers, whom Montalembert anxiously and eagerly laboured to prove were always obedient and submissive to the Roman See: and finally, by Augustine and his unquestionably orthodox companions, about whose Romanism there has never been any doubt. We will not enter into the question whether the historian of the Monks has fully proved the non-existence of that "pure Culdee" to whom the Protestant imagination

fondly clings; but he has brought a large mass of evidence to bear upon the subject, and his picture of Columba is certainly the most attractive and popular ever given to the world.

The following extracts from a letter to Lord Dunraven will show with what wonderful labour and zeal he gave himself to his task:—

"La Roche en Breny, *February* 11, 1863.

"My dear Friend,—Who would ever have thought that your letter of the 6th would find me many fathoms under water in the ocean of Celtic antiquities: but so it was, and so it still is; for I am still at the bottom of that sea of darkness and difficulty. Being a Goth by origin and by conviction, I always thought I had a right to despise the Celts. But now, alas! I am punished for having gone out of my way in doing homage to Irish and Cambrian archæology and hagiology. The fact is, for the last five months I have been doing nothing else but studying the books I unfortunately got as a present from you and Dr Reeves. If I had never opened them I should have been half-way on to the publication of my two next volumes; instead of which I have not yet written a single line of the third volume, all on account of these terrible Celtic quartos, which nobody on earth cares for except

yourself. I began with an interesting German work by Waller of Bonn, called 'Des Alte Wales;' and having been thus duly imbued with Celtic lore, I stepped into O'Curry's ponderous volume, which reminded me of your very legitimate grief when I informed you of his death during our stay at Oban. After having read every line of O'Curry I took to Reeves, first his *opuscules* and next his splendid edition of Adamnan. I had read and extracted many things from Adamnan in the Bollandists; but I confess I had no idea what the whole thing was till I had got through Reeves's book, notes, appendix, and all. Now I ought to set about writing, but here comes the Paris season, which for me begins with the Academical solemnities of the 26th of this month; and when I am once in Paris I never am able to do anything serious. But *en attendant*, you shall be mulcted for having laid down on my poor intellectual shoulders this immediate *surcharge* of useless erudition—*useless* I call it, because no creature in France will give me the least credit for it—and my only hope is that the Celtic saints will do something for me in the next world!

"Now, then, listen to all I want, and which goes far beyond *the little outline of the Early Irish Church* which you kindly offered me in

your last. You must either get for me or *tell* me all I am going to put down.

"1st and *least*. That book about *Neath* which Mr Talbot showed and seemed to offer me, and which I was such a great fool as not to bring away with me.

2d. Williams's 'Historical Account of the Monasteries of Wales,' published in the Transactions of the Cymnrodorim, or some such hideous name, vol. ii. p. 203-262.

"3d. *What* and *where* is a place called Dowcanthey in Wales, and is the S. Paulinus buried there the same 'Ultramontane Jesuit' who converted Edwin of Northumbria, and was first Bishop of York?

"4th. O'Curry (Lecture xv. p. 328) mentions an English translation of S. Columbkill's 'Poem of Confidence' in the 'Miscellany of the Irish Archæological Society.' Columbkill has nothing of the *bavard* about him. I suppose this poem must be short, and should much desire a copy.

"5th. Both O'Curry and Reeves mention the Altus of Columbkill as being in course of publication by Dr Todd. Is this publication come out? is it English or Latin? and can I have it?

"(I cannot conceive why Reeves did not give a complete text and translation of S. Columba's

authentic poems, as he has done for that beautiful elegy, which I intend to declare authentic on account of its exquisite beauty.)

"6th. Your interesting MS. note about the *Culdees*, and the absurdity of looking upon them as the earliest Christians among the Celts, is *more* than confirmed by Dr Reeves, who states that they only came to sight in the *tenth* century. Is this not going too far? or does he only mean to speak of the Culdees in Ireland?

"7th. Is the isle of Eigg still Catholic? The passage in Reeves seems to prove that it was so in 1703.

"8th. Is Lynch's 'Cambrensis Cursus,' lately issued by the United Archæological and Celtic Society, to be had anywhere?

"I can't make out what is the difference between all the united and *dis*united Celtic, Irish, Hibernian, archæological, and botherological societies.

"There now, my dear friend, you have enough to give you a world of trouble, of which I hope you will not complain, considering you have brought it all down upon yourself by introducing me into Celtic society."

The following playful note refers to the dedication of one of the volumes :—

"La Roche en Breny, Cote d'Or,
September 28, 1865.

"My dear Friend, — Wishing to be extremely agreeable to your Lordship, I have taken into my mind to dedicate to you my third volume, all about S. Columba, whose acquaintance I chiefly owe to you and your volume of Adamnan. But as I know by experience that people are constantly exposed to displease those whom they most wish to please, by not consulting them beforehand, I wish to know whether you have any objection to seeing your name in print together with mine in the accompanying lines. I hope you will enjoy the pun on *comes* and *comissimus*. I am particularly proud of my Latin." *

* The Latin is as follows :—

Prænobili viro
Edvino Wyndham Quin,
Comiti de Dunraven
Hiberniæ et Britanniæ Pari,
Ordinis S. Patricii Equiti,
Comiti Itineris Comissimo,
Amico in Adversis Probatissimo,
Civi Priscæ Fidei Simul ac Patriæ Laudi
Servantissimo
Qui insuper,
Ex Antiquissima inter Celtas Progenie
Editus,
Celticis Catholicisque Rebus
Strenue semper incubuit,
Tertium Hoc Operosi Laboris Volumen
D. D. D.
Carolus Comes de Montalembert.

The three later volumes he himself identified by the second title of 'The Conversion of England by the Monks,'—a title which he was very anxious to have given in chief to the version which was published almost simultaneously in England, hoping thereby to indemnify himself for the lessened interest of his native audience. "These volumes, as you see," he writes, "are entirely British, a great fault in the eyes of my French public. I fear they will not meet much more sympathy in England, for other and still more cogent reasons." He was disappointed, however, when he found that it was considered more advisable, even in England, to retain the general title of 'Monks of the West.'

We must crave the pardon of the reader for instancing one or two more evidences of his anxiety about the faithfulness of the translation, though it has somewhat the aspect of a *fait personnel.* The translator, on one solitary occasion, whether with or without sufficient reason it is needlesss to discuss, applied to him for permission to leave out half a sentence in some of his remarks upon St Columba. The circumstances were as follows: He had just apostrophised the "blessed nations" to whom it is given to cherish the memory of patriot-saints, whose very names are a protest and indignant *réclamation* against injustice; and as an evidence of

this blessedness he quoted the fact that the effigy of St Columba, "along with that of St Patrick, the Harp of Erin, and the Tree of Liberty, had been (in the year 1863) borne by the Irish patriots in their demonstrations against British supremacy." This, the translator felt, was no particular recommendation of St Columba to the English reader, nor credit to the Saint, who was himself quite innocent and unconcerned in the matter. And as there was even no opinion involved—for M. de Montalembert did not, so far as we are aware, in any degree espouse the cause of the Nationalists, the request seemed to her a very simple and natural one. And it was granted, but with the following reflections :—

"On my very recent return from Spain, I have found your kind letter. I perfectly enter into your feelings about the passage you mention, and have no sort of objections to your leaving it out. But I am afraid you will find, particularly in the fourth volume, many passages with which you will disagree on more serious grounds. I therefore think you had better begin your version of the two next volumes by a sort of address to your own public, in which you will point out the different subjects on which you will naturally differ from me. It

is impossible for a Catholic to write about the monastic institutions in England without alluding to their destruction by the Reformation, in a language which must be disagreeable to Protestants; and at the same time, to leave out all these objectionable passages would seriously impair the sincerity of the translation. If you meet with any expressions which may wound your religious or patriotic feelings, remember how very prevalent the most painful language on these matters is with your countrymen and countrywomen. This ought, and will, I am sure, make you indulgent for me. I have had to undergo, during my journey in Spain, all the bigoted outbreaks of Mr Ford (in Murray's Handbook) at every step, against *all* that Catholics are taught to venerate and believe. Sorry and ashamed I should be if anything calculated to offend, in such a way, the *belief* of Protestant Christians, had ever fallen from my pen. I merely wish to maintain the freedom of my judgment on historical facts and persons."

It is unnecessary, we trust, to add, that no sort of idea of interfering with, or leaving out of his book, any of M. de Montalembert's opinions had ever entered our mind. Our only

anxiety was to be allowed to omit the unnecessary detail which associated the memory of St Columba with the mob of Irish Nationalists, afterwards developed into Fenians. That his mind was not perfectly reassured on this point, as well as some of the causes of his anxiety to seem no less Catholic than he truly was, will be seen in the following letter :—

"What I must insist upon is — the exact reproduction of all the passages in my book, which, to you, must seem the most offensive to English and Protestant ears. There is amongst the English Catholics, as well as amongst the Irish, a party of violent, denunciating, and persecuting people, who are unfortunately in possession of almost all our religious periodical press. They look upon me as more than half a heretic (as may be seen in M. Veuillot's last production, *l'Illusion libérale*) on account of my liberal and conciliatory opinions ; and if my views, moderate as they are, were to be attenuated in the English text, all those who are now barking against Dr Newman (on account of his strictures on certain forms of worship of the B. Virgin), and many others, would soon run into equal obloquy ; I should be obliged to give explanations, and thus lose both

my time and my patience in a most thankless task."

We are glad to add, in order to conclude this little personal digression, that on the conclusion of the work, M. de Montalembert bore witness to "the scrupulous and most conscientious fidelity of the text," and "the good faith and straightforward equity of a most literal translation."

We may add a few sentences which show the same feeling as that recorded above, from another letter, addressed to Mr Monsell, and dated Paris, April 30, 1856. The book in this case is not the "Monks," but his work on England; however, the sentiment expressed is very much the same.

"It would indeed be very kind of you to send me by some way or other the 'Quarterly' with Croker's article, which I have not been able to find anywhere in Paris. . . . As for the attacks on my book, I really am quite gratified to think that all this Anglican bigotry will perhaps convince our Catholic friends that I am not turned Protestant because I admire the English Constitution. But will no Catholic paper in all England take my part against Croker & Co.? If so, then really the spirit of

the 'Univers' is more prevalent among you than I could have apprehended."

The History of the Monks was carried on by the author under circumstances of suffering which would have made any work remarkable, and which were doubly wonderful in the case of a book requiring such constant reference to authorities, and so much critical, we had almost said physical, toil, in addition to mental exertion. "Shall I ever be able to finish it?" he asks, on one occasion; "that is a question to which I cannot return any positive answer. All I can say is, that I have done my utmost during the last few months. But this utmost is very little. I cannot stay out of bed more than an hour or two every day; and when I have written a page, or even half a page, I feel quite exhausted. I still trust, however, that if there is no aggravation in my present state, I shall have done what still remains to do by the end of the present month." No words of ours are required to point out the wonderful energy of the man, who, suffering the most intense and protracted pain, and able to be up for only an hour in the day, employs that hour in carrying to at least a partial completion the great work which he had contemplated all his life.

These five volumes, the last of which was published in 1867, are all that remain to us of the contemplated work. In the last letter ever received from him by the writer, which has been unfortunately lost, he says pathetically, that he must make up his mind to leave his cherished undertaking "to younger and happier hands." But it was not till those hands had indeed lost their cunning, and could no longer hold the always ready pen, that this last act of renunciation was made. A great amount of material prepared, and ready for the final writing out, exists, we believe, left behind him in the admirable order which always distinguished him; and something like a volume is ready for publication; but the work itself remains—a great and noble sketch, partly filled in, like one of Michael Angelo's pictures. "This great monument of history, this great work interrupted by death," says M. Cochin, "is gigantic as an uncompleted cathedral, in which he has raised up, with many cares, with art as able as it was patient, and with infinite research, the monumental statues of those three giants, Augustine, Columbanus, and Boniface, who introduced with their powerful and blessed hands the three great countries, England, the Gauls, and Germany, within the

sphere of Christian civilisation." We believe, however, that the ordinary reader, at least on this side of the Channel, will feel more interest in the picture of the wild and impetuous but generous Columba, and in that of the imperious churchman Wilfred. Both are noble and sympathetic representations of most notable men; and distant as their periods are, and distinct as is the theory of their biographer, yet there are few passages of Church history more conscientiously illustrated, and none, so far as we are aware, so eloquently and so attractively described.

The other labours of M. de Montalembert's concluding life were either directly polemical—if we may use the word to describe such productions as his letter to Count Cavour on the Italian question—or biographical. We do not ourselves sympathise, nor do we expect the English nation to sympathise, in the outcry of grief and indignation with which he saw the States of the Church detached, bit by bit, from the government of the Pope; nor can we enter into the warm and strong feeling with which most good Roman Catholics regard this question. Our business, however, is not to defend, but to show what were, in our opinion, the sentiments of Montalembert. He had, in the

first place, we may say, a deep-rooted and strong objection to every centralising tendency, to the grouping of many little States into one great one, as well as to that system which, within the bosom of a country, gathers all power and government into one spot, and annihilates everything like local independence. Long before there was any question of despoiling Rome, he had praised and defended the small States of Italy, believing them to be the means of keeping intellectual life alive at many points where it would have failed altogether, had there been but one great capital to swallow up all. This was a favourite subject with him at all times, and it went to his heart to find the once lively centres of French life—places supporting a university and possessing a society of their own, such as Dijon, Marseilles, and various others—falling one by one into the utter torpor of French provincialism, while Paris absorbed everything that represented mind or talent. In the same way, and for reasons which were not exclusively religious, he deprecated the formation of one big State out of the many little States which seemed to him to retain more truly the principles and energy of life. Something infinitely more warm and fervent, however, moved him when the States of the Church were

in question. To us it seems strange enough that the zealous Romanist should desire to burden the hands of his spiritual head, the great bishop and overseer of so many souls, with the petty concerns of an insignificant secular kingdom. But to good Roman Catholics everywhere, and to Montalembert in particular, the safeguard of this little kingdom appeared an invaluable guarantee of independence for the Head of the Church.

Their argument is comprehensible enough, however little we may be inclined to share it. The Pope, they say, by his very position, must inevitably place himself now and then in spiritual conflict with the great powers of this earth. When he sees his faithful children crushed and oppressed, as in Poland, how is it possible that he can keep silence? Supposing such a very likely case as that some new effort of the Poles should cause new proscriptions, massacres, and persecutions in Poland, it would be the Pope's duty, as father of the faithful, to protest and remonstrate with the oppressor, and to give the balm of his sympathy to the sufferers. But suppose, on the other hand, that as Italy is now constituted, the Emperor of Russia were to resist this interference, and make the King of Italy responsible for it, the consequence would be, the coercion of the Pope in his spiritual

capacity; or if, as is unlikely, the Italian people supported him, the matter might end in a great war. This is an instance of the evils inevitable, according to the Catholic theory, from the separation of the spiritual and temporal power, and nobody will deny that there is a certain justice in it.

Or suppose, on the other hand, that the King of Italy, perceiving the immense influence of the Pope throughout the world, should conceive, as is likely enough, a desire to use that influence to his particular advantage. It would inevitably follow, according to this theory, that his supreme power would bias the election of Pope, so as to make the Pontiff a creature of his own; just as the same power might secure a servile class of candidates for the Papal chair, by influencing the election of Cardinals. For these reasons, the good Roman Catholic considers the temporal power of the Pope indispensable; a protection not only to the Pope himself, but to Christianity. We repeat, that there is a certain justice in this view. It is at least comprehensible. No quarrel with the Pope would be likely to lead a great nation to declare war with the Papal States; but with Italy the case would be different; and, as a matter of theory, it is easy enough to believe that a

little strip of independent territory would be the best guarantee of the freedom of election, the freedom of action, which is of so much importance to all who believe in the sovereign Pontiff's supreme authority. This is the argument of Montalembert. According to his theory, no Church could be free which was thus liable to be threatened or influenced. When the question is regarded from this point of view, it certainly requires an immense faith in human nature to believe that a king of Italy, once thoroughly settled upon his throne, would never be tempted to interfere, as temporal sovereigns are in the habit of interfering, in the affairs of his unarmed and defenceless spiritual neighbour; or that a government which has exercised the right of naming its own bishops, should not by-and-by claim for itself a right to nominate the greatest ecclesiastic of all, whose first and most inalienable title is that of Bishop of Rome. Such questions as these demand consideration; and there can be no doubt they are deeply important to Roman Catholic Christians. The drawback in the matter, however—according to our opinion—the fact so triumphantly demonstrated a short time ago, that Rome itself preferred the sway of the king to that of the Pope, and would rather be capital of Italy than capital of Christendom—is one to

which we know no reply. Had the inhabitants of that wonderful city been themselves willing to sacrifice their liberties for the sake of Christianity, the problem would have been much easier. As it was, Montalembert and his party took a view of this question widely different from ours. They took it for granted that either Rome herself did not wish for any change of government, or that the Pope would some time or other, in some way or other, grant them a sufficient modicum of liberty to satisfy them. In their eyes, the murder of Rossi, and the commotions that followed, were sufficient proof that the Romans neither understood nor wished for constitutional liberty. And, in short, they put this side of the question out of their consideration. Other interests, more important, made them indifferent to the fact that the States of the Church, equally with all other States, had a right to freedom. They were tacitly content to conclude that the interests of Christendom demanded the sacrifice of the natural rights of the Roman people.

With such sentiments in his mind, it is not to be wondered at if Montalembert's remonstrance with the arch-enemy of all such ideas, —the man whose whole heart and life had been devoted to the work of creating one great, pow-

erful, and united country out of the sundered and oppressed strays of the old Italian States—should have been warm and vehement. There was no point of junction between two such men, each possessed by a master-idea which contradicted that of the other. The letters to Cavour, however, are not likely to retain any permanent place among the known works of Montalembert. Polemics are for contemporaries, not even for a posterity so near as this is. But should this question ever be dispassionately considered on its rights as an abstract question, uncomplicated by the necessities of politics, or the vehemence of national feeling, the value of these letters as a plea for the temporal power of the Pope must be great. They place the discussion on the highest ground—a ground which Catholic and Protestant, and every reasonable man, must alike understand and appreciate. Only a comparatively small number will probably share his opinion; but all will at least be able to comprehend the real moral weight and importance of his argument, which of itself is a great gain.

More sympathetic, however, and more attractive, are the biographical works which occupied some of his later years. There is nothing so sad in the evening of life as the dropping off,

one after another, round the survivor, of those who have been his companions in arms, the friends of his youth, his advisers, his supporters and allies in the labours of his life. Lacordaire, as the reader has seen, had been all this to Montalembert. His influence had been increased even by their difference in age, which made it possible for him to form the mind of the younger man, and to guide him at one of the most momentous points in his career. In their maturer life they had not always agreed. Once, at least, they had been absolutely separated for some time by the warmth of political feeling. In the critical moments which preceded and followed the Revolution of 1848, the priest, strangely enough, took a view more liberal, more popular, than that of the layman. He considered Montalembert's prophetic horror of the triumph of Radicalism, as embodied in his great speech on the affairs of Switzerland, to be excessive, and without sufficient foundation; and he had not recognised the danger to society and order involved in the Revolution itself, but had been persistently hopeful, believing, with renewed enthusiasm, in the new beginning of national life, and even, to a certain extent, in the Republic. At a later period he had taken the same liberal view of the Italian question, "sincerely

applauding the war of 1859, because he believed it just and favourable to the emancipation of a Christian people," and refusing to be alarmed on the subject of the Papal States until the very last moment.

This disagreement on two most important points had partially separated the friends. But the separation did not last. They had too many thoughts, feelings, and recollections in common, to be permanently sundered. Lacordaire was but too soon convinced, by the disastrous end of the Republic, of the justice of all Montalembert's apprehensions; nor was he less grieved and indignant than his friend when the rights of the Holy See were invaded. They were reunited in the end of their life, as they had been in the beginning, but in a sadder and less hopeful way—reunited in enforced silence, in indignation which imbittered their lives, not only against the power which oppressed them, but against the party which had abandoned them.

To this latter indignation Lacordaire gave the most distinct and marked expression: "We must break with men who do wrong in God's name," he said; "and we ought not to address such men as *mon cher ami*, because we have known them long, and they receive the Holy Communion

every week. We ought not to hate them, but we ought to separate ourselves from them, and, above all, to have no fear of those whom we consider no longer worthy of our affection." Carrying out this sentiment to the letter, he had coldly and proudly intimated to one of the old writers of the 'Avenir,' Monseigneur de Salinis, Archbishop of Auch, "one of the principal authors of the great Catholic recantation of 1852," the impossibility of further friendship between them. "'L'Univers' is, to my eyes, the negation of Christian feeling and human good sense," he had written, with all the painful warmth of shame and indignation which a good soldier feels when he sees his former comrades under the banners of the enemy. He too, like Montalembert, was a deserted leader; and when the latter records the sentiments of his friend on this subject, it is with an earnestness and force which mark how entirely they were his own. In this way the memoir of Lacordaire is half an autobiography of Montalembert. Even in their moments of separation it is necessary to know the position of one in order fully to understand that of the other. And when the struggles and combats of publicity were over for both, the complete accord, the indignant and sad unanimity of two of the noblest and best

men of their generation, make such a picture as has seldom been presented to us. We may quote from both the testimony in which each expresses the other's sentiments as well as his own. The following letter was written by Lacordaire a few months before his death, on the painful subject we have already referred to, the desertion of so many members of the old Catholic party, the old hopeful band of the 'Avenir,' whose device was "God and freedom," into the party at once Imperialist and Absolutist, which was represented by the 'Univers.' When it is remembered that this letter was written and received by the two leading members of that body which had accepted, with pride in its day, the name of ultra-Catholic, the reader will understand more clearly how great and how melancholy to them was the change which had thus occurred.

"This odious apostasy, which has been one of the causes of the present misfortunes of the Church, still continues then" (writes Lacordaire), "though it has been already sorely punished. Thank God, you and I (*toi et moi*) have been strangers to that horrible drama of pride, insolence, and ignorance. This is our everlasting distinction, the proof of our sincerity, the last link of our public friendship. We have not

been of those who, after having demanded *freedom for all—civil, political, and religious liberty* —have raised the flag of the Inquisition and of Philip II.; who have shamelessly denied their own words, outraged their old companions in arms because of their constancy and fidelity, dishonoured the Church, saluted Cæsar with acclamations which would have disgusted Tiberius; and who still, notwithstanding all the lessons taught them by passing events, wrap themselves in their own shame, in the evil they have done and the disgrace with which they are covered." "I know" (adds Montalembert) "to what I expose myself in evoking from his grave, against an aberration which has so many accomplices, the voice of thunder of this great and indignant Christian. It would, however, be necessary to interdict the utterance of every useful truth, if the authority of testimony like that of Lacordaire, impressed with the seal of his entire life, and with the still more impressive seal of death, might not be appealed to. He felt in all its intensity what he called 'the biting grief called forth by the sight of the men and things of the present time.' It may be said, literally, that he was devoured by it. And it is not going too far to say, that his life was shortened by it as much as by his excessive

self-mortifications. Let no one reproach him for this; those who know nothing of such griefs, are more to be pitied than those who die of them."

Here is again another passage, in which, while describing the premature withdrawal of his friend from public life, Montalembert expresses all his own soul. Lacordaire had been tacitly shut out from the pulpit of Nôtre Dame in the end of 1851. After this he had held six "Conferences" at Toulouse in 1854, but in these too he had expressed sentiments which were no longer seasonable, and thus his eloquent lips were finally closed while he was still in the full force of his manhood and strength.

"I do not suppose that any formal prohibition, proceeding even from the temporal authorities, had ever been pronounced against him; but there was a kind of common sentiment, that the free and bold utterance which had been heard for twenty years, under various governments, without encountering any obstacle, acknowledging no limit but that of orthodoxy, was no longer in its proper place. Evil days had come for the struggles and triumphs of eloquence. It was universally rejected, and

rendered responsible for all the misfortunes of the country, all the dangers of society—a triumphant revenge for those who could never find any one to listen to them. The prince of sacred eloquence was thus obliged to be silent. He has said since then, 'I disappeared from the pulpit out of a spontaneous fear for my freedom, in an age which had lost its own. I understood,' he added, 'that in my thoughts, my language, my past, and all that remained to me of the future, I too was at liberty, and that my hour had come to disappear with the rest.' When Lacordaire left the pulpit of Nôtre Dame for ever he was not forty-nine. Under more than one aspect, the words which he had spoken some years before, of M. de Forbin-Janson, Bishop of Nancy—words which, indeed, it is easy to apply and to meditate in a country which so often gives itself the pleasure of smiling at unmerited and sudden overthrow—might be applied to himself: 'He was forty-five: it is the age of fulness, the age at which all that has been sown in life rises round a man with branches rich in shadow, and covered with fruits: and it was at this age that he found himself called upon to lose his past, and to see his life laid at his feet like a tree cut down by the roots. It is difficult to those who have never experienced it,

to know all the pain of this situation, and how much courage is necessary not to succumb under it. Monsignor de Janson did not succumb: though it was neither without emotion nor without regret that he looked upon his downfall, yet he found in his heart resources sufficient to support him before God, to honour him before men, and to make him still serviceable for the good of his brethren.'

"The great orator had, besides, no complaint to make of violence or persecution; and I only say the truth, in declaring that I never found the least trace of bitterness or animosity in his mind against the new power. That power inspired him only with sentiments of that neutrality, dignified and somewhat disdainful, which was natural to him in respect to all powers. But the country, public opinion, the multitude! that country which he had believed to be consumed by thirst for freedom! that opinion which he had seen so excitable, prompt not only to resist but to revolt! those multitudes, ever so rebellious to all authority, even the gentlest, which had become all at once so eager not only to accept but to implore a master! Ah! what a disenchantment was that for his patriotic enthusiasm! He expressed himself strongly, as he felt, upon this subject.

'It is possible,' he said, 'to have wit, knowledge, even genius, without character. Such is France in our days. She abounds in men who have accepted everything from the hands of fortune, and who, nevertheless, have betrayed nothing; because, in order to betray, it is necessary first to have stood by something. Events, for them, are like passing clouds, a spectacle or a shelter, nothing more. They yield to them without resistance, as they have prepared them without meaning it, inconsistent playthings of a past which they never mastered, and a future which reveals no secrets to them. . . . Every attempt fails against the force of thirty millions of men who do not know how to hold fast upon a foundation, and who have lost the political sentiment both of religion and their rights.'"

This continual and mutual reflection of one soul in the other, which was natural after a connection so long continued, and a union so close, gives a double interest to Montalembert's sketch of his friend. It is not a formal memoir. The subject is treated with a touching individuality, as if to an audience of old companions. "Notre ami" is the title by which Lacordaire is spoken of. And the book is, as we have already

said, half an autobiography. The author and he whose life he records appear always together, inseparable, revealing each other, their very differences pointing the outline of each character, giving to it force and individuality. "I die a penitent Catholic and an impenitent Liberal," the great priest wrote at the end of his life; and so, too, said his friend, in ways more strong than words. Neither of them ever wavered from their fidelity to their Church, although the most active party in that Church did their best to disgust and estrange them; and neither ever gave up for an instant their political faith and love of freedom. Penitent in everything but this, they both ended their days—for God and freedom spending their last breath.

We need not linger upon the other biographical sketches which appropriately occupy the last pages of Montalembert's collected works; they are all records of friends, of men who have lived and laboured with him, and fallen by his side in the long conflict. One of these—the notice of General de Lamoricière—is an affecting picture of a true, serious, and single-minded soldier, full of heroism, chivalry, and courage, yet tender and gentle, as such men always are. Once more, but with still a severer tone of

indignant pain, Montalembert sounds again the same note of proud sorrow over the men silenced, exiled, set aside from the service of their country, whose sufferings he understood so well, and shared so deeply. This indignant grief indeed rises, in the following pages, into a cry of pathetic bitterness which goes to the heart. He is speaking of Lamoricière on the eve of the Crimean war.

"France was about to make war, a great war, and her bravest sons, her great chiefs, were not there! The battalions which they had formed, commanded, and so often led to victory, were brought from Africa to march under other chiefs to new triumphs. But they, so long the first and only leaders — they to whom the eyes of France and of Europe were accustomed to turn—they, still palpitating with ardour, with vigour, with patriotism, who had never failed their country, who had never shrunk from the requirements of honour or justice—they were condemned to inaction, to forgetfulness, to annihilation! Subaltern names rose up and filled the first rank in the attention of the world. Who can say, who can conceive, the anguish, the torments, of these men, at once so illustrious and brave, and—let it not be for-

gotten—so innocent and irreproachable before the army and the nation?"

The only other literary production to which we shall refer, is one which stands by itself among Montalembert's works, unlike anything else, and yet so thoroughly like him that it claims decided notice. It is entitled, "The Victory of the North in the United States," and is little else than a hymn of triumph in honour of that success, which, to him, was a pure success of right over wrong, of freedom over slavery. We have no desire to enter into the question or re-discuss a subject so often discussed and in such various ways; but to Montalembert there were no complications in the matter. It was a pure victory of principle in his eyes—all secondary causes he swept away as unworthy of consideration. He regarded the struggle as one between light and darkness, between oppression and enfranchisement, and with unquestioning exultation he hailed the great victory. The following passage is too characteristic to be left out:—

"It is well known that we are not in the habit of burning incense to victory, of applauding conquerors. This is the first time,

for thirty years, that an opportunity for so doing has offered itself to us; and it is certain that we are not likely to abuse this novel power, or to fall into the habit of it. Let us then be permitted to-day to give ourselves up to so rare an enjoyment, by linking our present rejoicing to those days too soon over, in which the Charter of 1814, the enfranchisement of Greece, the emancipation of the English and Irish Catholics, the conquest of Algiers, the creation of Belgium, came in succession to adorn the youth of this century, to rejoice all liberal hearts, and to mark the successive steps in the path of true progress. Again, after an interval too much prolonged, we have once more a happy victory. Once more we see good conquering evil, and strength triumphing in the service of right. Thus the great and singular delight is provided for us of witnessing, even in this world, the success of a good cause, gained by good means and worthy men. Let us thank the Lord of hosts for this glory and happiness. Let us thank Him for the great victory He has accorded to us; for the eternal confusion of all the various and numerous classes of those who oppress and take advantage of their fellow-creatures, whether by slavery or by corruption, by deceit or by cupidity, by sedition or by oppression."

This is the only song of triumph over an accomplished fact, which, so far as we are aware, Montalembert ever uttered. In his early youth he had celebrated, with a similar outburst of joy, what he believed to be the resurrection of Poland. But Poland had sunk again under the hard hand of her master, and that burst of delight had fallen into the sorrowful cry of indignant grief over a mourning nation. But here was one triumph over which the champion of liberty everywhere, liberty for all, could rejoice with a full heart, without doubt or drawback. Nothing could be more characteristic of the man. Between the early days of the century, in which freedom seemed to be setting in with a strong and healthful tide, and this last great (and, as it seemed to many people, unintentional) overthrow of the last stronghold of slavery, no victory had excited him. The Italian cause had been made bitter and painful to him by the danger of Rome. But here was one last conquest of freedom in which no shadows mingled, —which, in his eyes, was pure gain, triumph of right and justice, enfranchisement of a whole race. And under the darkening skies more near at hand, where no dawn of freedom was; and amid the darkness of the night which began to close around him, one moment of exultation,

one utterance of triumph expanded the breast and the voice of the old and faithful soldier of freedom. Always with a pang at his heart for France and Frenchmen, he sent forth this last cheer out of the darkness. And yet even his patriotism derived a forlorn satisfaction from that victory; for France had her share in America, a tradition which has always formed a certain bond of sentiment between the two countries. From La Fayette to the young Orleans Princes, had she not always lent to the rebellious child of her old enemy, England, her sympathies and her aid? Thus the only victorious cause which Montalembert ever celebrated was that which he believed to be the triumph of a principle—and that principle the most primitive and fundamental freedom.*

* That this victory, in which he sympathised so deeply, was not quite such an ideal victory as he hoped, he would seem to have begun to fear a little later, as will be apparent from the following passage in a letter to Lord Dunraven:—

"Toulon, *June* 8, 1865.

"I trust you have been startled by my American article in the 'Correspondant,' which, I suppose, you still read, or at least still take in. There you will have seen how far I am for you shocking English supercilious oligarchs, and your abuse of the Northern people, the remembrance of which has always preyed upon me ever since I left England three years ago. However, I grant that Johnson and his crew are behaving very ill, and, above all, very foolishly, since their victory. I still hope that no blood will be shed, and that they will not disgrace their glo-

These were the last productions of his life.

rious cause more than they already have done by their sanguinary blusterings and derisive amnesty ; but if worse is to take place, you English and Anglo-Irish will have not the slightest right to abuse your American cousins, remembering your horrible doings in Scotland after the '45, and particularly in Ireland during and after the rebellion of 1798 ! ! *Qui sine peccato est vestrum, primus in illam lapidem mittat.*"

CHAPTER XIX.

HIS LAST DAYS.

THE last years of Montalembert's life were years of suffering, protracted and grievous. Each new attack of his malady was more severe than the former one, and the renewal of strength afterwards more slow and less complete. From the year 1852, indeed, when he was first seized by it, he was never safe from its threatenings, although it was, we think, in 1857 that the greater violence of the attacks began seriously to alarm his physicians. The course of his life was serene and laborious, interrupted by few events. We have already recorded his visits to England and the trial which followed one of them, and the repeated journeys in other regions which broke the calm of his always busy and well-occupied existence. This changed and silent life, however, contained yet one triumph like those of his earlier years. In August 1863,

at the great religious meeting known as the Congress of Malines, Montalembert made his last public appearance. The assembly was very large and enthusiastic, and no country had a better right to appropriate and applaud the great orator, to feel his triumph its own, and to mingle familiar affection with the enthusiasm of its welcome, than Belgium, the country of his wife, the object of his constant good wishes, which had never been assailed without finding in him a champion, and which he had so often held up to the interest and admiration of the world. He was received with overwhelming enthusiasm, and had to make his way to the tribune, where his speech was delivered, amid the deafening cheers of the crowd. But his health no longer permitted that easy and familiar grace of personal address which so many critics had commented on and described. He was obliged to be seated while he read the long and eloquent address, afterwards published under the title of 'L'Eglise libre dans l'Etat libre.' Even of this inability, however, with his usual happy suavity, he made a compliment to his audience. "I am truly disconcerted to bring you only a written speech," he said; "but twelve years of silence have lost me the habit of speech. I can now only read, and read seated as at the

Academy. You will pardon me, however, I trust, for treating you as the Academy is treated."

The speech thus introduced is one of his great efforts. A certain grave and dignified maturity of tone, the accent of a man who has long been silent, who has pondered much and sadly upon the dangers which await the cause most dear to him, and who at last has it in his power to warn the younger supporters of that cause how to guide their steps for its best advantage, is in every word. His very eloquence is tempered by his deep gravity, his studied moderation, and anxiety for the welfare of the Church to which he gives his serious advice. It was not age which constrained and controlled the energy of his style, or its poetic fulness and fervour, for there are many pages of his, written later than this speech, which burn and glow with all the ancient fire. The curb which he puts upon himself is more touching than any mere physical calming down of an enthusiast spirit. It is the burden of the message he has to deliver, and his anxiety to give that message full force. For the last time he stood face to face with the inheritors of his mission, those who were still free to carry on that work for which events first and now weakness had disabled him; and with all the anxiety of a father instructing his children—of

a leader laying out his plan of warfare before the generals who must succeed him—he delivered his serious and lofty address. What society really is in its new organisation, the product of revolution—what it is likely to do amid all the new influences that affect it—and what is the position which the Church ought to take in this unaccustomed state of affairs,—such are the subjects which he treats. We will make but one extract from this speech, but that will be enough to show its general object and strain. He has just disclaimed with warmth the idea that he had any intention of "rejecting or calumniating the past in order to preach the worship of a new idea." "Rather a thousand times," he cries, "let my hand wither, than that it should recommend this vulgar baseness to my brethren or fathers in the faith!"

"For my own part, I am no democrat; but I am still less an absolutist. I endeavour above all not to be blind. Full of deference and love for the past in all that is good and great in it, I do not despise the present, and I study the future. Looking on in advance, I see nothing anywhere but democracy. I see this deluge rise—rise continually—reaching everything and overflowing everything. I fear it as a man, but

as a Christian I do not fear it; for where I see the deluge, I see also the ark. Upon that great ocean of democracy, with its abysses, its whirlpools, its breakers, its dead calms, and its hurricanes, the Church alone may venture forth without defiance and without fear. She alone will never be swallowed up there. She alone has a compass which never varies, and a Pilot who makes no mistakes.

"This being the case, I go to the foundation of the question, and establish boldly this proposition. In the ancient order of things Catholics have nothing to regret, in the new order nothing to fear. Let it be well understood—I do not say, nothing to admire in the past; I say, nothing to regret. I do not say, nothing to resist in the new system; I say, nothing to fear. We shall have on the contrary to struggle much and always; but if we take the right mode of action, we shall be invincible. Yes: if descending from the ark upon that soil which I showed to you just now covered by the waves of the democratic deluge—if, in proportion as the waves which have invaded and overthrown everything sink in their turn, and allow a new earth to appear; if we enter peaceably and courageously upon that new world to raise our altars there, to plant our tents, to fertilise it by

our labours, to purify it by our devotion, and to struggle against the dangers inseparable from democracy with the immortal resources of liberty; if we understand and fulfil this task, we shall be not unassailable, but invincible. . . .

"The future of modern society," he continues, "depends on two problems—to correct democracy by liberty, to conciliate Catholicism with democracy. The first is much the more difficult of the two. The natural affinities of democracy on one side with despotism, on the other with the spirit of revolution, are the great lessons of history, and the great threat of the future. Driven about without cause between the two abysses, modern democracy seeks painfully its proper place and its moral equilibrium. It will never attain these without the help of religion.

"But for Catholics, condemned whether they will or not to live henceforward only in the midst of democracy, and with the power of exercising upon it a fruitful and salutary influence, they must learn to accept the vital conditions of modern society. Above all, they must give up the vain hope of seeing a rule of privilege again revived, or an absolute monarchy favourable to Catholicism. And it is not enough that this renunciation should be easy and sincere; it must become a common phase of

public life. It is necessary to protest clearly, boldly, publicly, on all occasions against all thought of a return to anything which will irritate or disquiet modern society."

Upon this subject he enlarges with all the pains of a teacher who has an unpalatable lesson to enforce. He tells the Catholics boldly that in public life they are inferior to others around them, because they continue to sigh after privileges which would be fatal to the Church, and because they obstinately ignore the signs of the time. He points out to them the dangers of democracy, its levelling tendencies, its hatred of everything higher in intellect or loftier in character, as well as more exalted in rank, than its own dreary flat and dead level of mediocrity. All of these dangers he felt deeply, to the bottom of his heart—and with all his might, with his natural eloquence restrained and chastened by the gravity and seriousness of his subject, he enforced them upon his hearers, pointing out the Church's high mission, and the great work that might be before her, would she but take it up. He did not flatter the audience which hung upon his lips. He had said he would treat them as he had treated the Academy; he did more—he treated them as men of high Christian feeling

and good intention ought to be treated, with perfect sincerity as to their weaknesses, with frank avowal of their characteristic faults, while he encouraged and pointed out to them the best, the highest, and most worthy way.

This speech was received with enthusiasm. The speaker, experienced in so many conflicts, who, "sick and worn out, risking his health in order to address the Catholic world from that tribune which Belgium offered to him when ungrateful France closed it," as says a spectator, had spoken from the depths of his heart; and his last utterance was received with the sympathy, almost reverential, as well as enthusiastic, which it deserved. "We have beheld a veritable miracle of human eloquence," said a speaker at the banquet which followed, "in seeing the illustrious orator hold captive an assembly of nearly four thousand persons for four hours, by his penetrating, elevated, and powerful address, and drawing from it enthusiastic acclamations and frantic applauses." Such a reception was a fit response to the last words he ever pronounced in public—nor was it a commonplace audience which was thus moved. It included Cardinals, high dignitaries, both of Church and State — the foremost class of Catholics everywhere; a kind

of representative assembly, an embodiment of the great religious world, his fellow-believers everywhere—which thus received what were, so far as the public was concerned, his last words.

Before we take leave of the public and political side of Montalembert's character, we may add a few sentences from his letters to Mr Monsell, which show his sentiments on some matters that specially interest the English reader. The first of these will prove how desirous he was that controversy should be conducted without heat or malice.

"I need not say with what anxiety and sympathy I am watching the progress of the Catholic movement in England and in Ireland. The Catholic Defence Association I look upon as a most useful and opportune institution, provided such men as Lord Arundel and yourself do seriously interfere with the direction of the body, and not leave it to hot-headed newspaper editors and imprudent sacerdotal speakers or letter-writers, like a certain priest whose name I forget, but whose epistle or oration about the bloodthirsty hatred of France for England has been translated into our papers, and produced the most deplorable effects."

The following refers to Mr Gladstone's Bill for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, a measure which it is needless to say Montalembert hailed with delight. We may add that he regarded with mingled wonder and disappointment the failure of this crowning act of justice and atonement to compose and satisfy the Irish people.

"La Roche, *August* 28, 1869.

"I was delighted to hear from you that Mr Gladstone is going on well after his most glorious campaign of the present year, in which I am so happy to think that you, my dear friend, have been his valiant and useful ally. I trust the salutary effect produced in Ireland by the Bill will not be weakened by party spirit on either side, but I confess I much regret a little of that concurrent endowment which Dunraven and the Duke of Cleveland pleaded for. Why the Scotch Education Bill was favourable to Catholics I cannot understand, but that you will explain to me when we next meet, remembering that I am a most decided partisan of the denominational system, as you call it. In this respect, but in this only, I agree with the ultra-Catholics both in and out of England."

A year or two later an event occurred

which was at once a poignant source of pain and of consolation to the heart and the family of Montalembert. One of his daughters, the inheritrix of much of her father's talent, and many of his characteristics, who had made a brilliant entry into "the world" some time before,—a bright, lively, and accomplished girl, worthy of her name and her paternity,—suddenly announced to her parents her desire to become a nun. It is impossible to imagine any domestic danger more overwhelming. With us there are a hundred absurd and artificial motives always suggested for such a step, and we doubt much if it is possible to convey to the British intelligence the fact, that it is possible for a young and happy woman, without disappointment, heartbreak, disgust of the world, or any other of the conventional reasons usually assigned for such a step, to choose deliberately, and of her own will, the life of the cloister; but that such a choice is within possibility, and even not extraordinary, is very well known in Roman Catholic countries. Nothing could be more natural than that this choice should be made by the daughter of the historian of the cloister, the man who had done more than all his contemporaries put together to vindicate the motives and principles of the monastic orders. But it does not

seem that such an anticipation had ever entered his mind. When his daughter avowed to him the resolution which had taken possession of her, it gave him a great shock and pang. No father could be more tender or affectionate, and the thought of giving up his child to so hard and self-denying a life went to his very heart. But the resolution was not one which it would have become Montalembert to resist, and she who made it did it in no burst of girlish enthusiasm, but after much thought, and after having made experiment of the delights of that society which she wished to abandon. "One day," says M. Cochin, "his charming and beloved child entered that library which all his friends know so well, and said to him, 'I am fond of everything around me. I love pleasure, wit, society and its amusements; I love my family, my studies, my companions, my youth, my life, my country; but I love God better than all, and I desire to give myself to him.' And when he said to her, 'My child, is there something that grieves you?' she went to the book-shelves and sought out one of the volumes in which he had narrated the history of the Monks of the West. 'It is you,' she answered, 'who have taught me that withered hearts and weary souls are not the things which we ought to offer to God.' Some months after,"

continues the same friendly and sympathetic narrator, "I had the happiness of accompanying the family to the humble sanctuary where the marriage ceremony was to take place; the priest was at the altar to celebrate the bridal, and the bride, adorned for her marriage, in her orange flowers and bridal veil, knelt radiant and tender at the altar. But there was no bridegroom there. The bridegroom was that invisible husband who, for two thousand years, has attached so many young souls to him by bonds which cannot be broken, and drawn them by a charm which nothing can equal."

Some time after this joyous but heart-rending ceremony, the writer recalls to her mind, how one evening, in his house in Paris, M. de Montalembert showed her the portrait of this bride of heaven. He held up the lamp, shading it tenderly with his hand, that the light might fall soft and clear upon the beloved face—a face young and bright and serenely gay, with flowers crowning the beautiful hair; a young princess of society, surrounded by all the pretty finery of youth. To think of that graceful and delicate being in the bare rooms and ceaseless occupations of conventual life—her pretty surroundings all gone from her, her fair face encircled by the close cap of her

order, her nights broken, her days full of toil, was still painful beyond expression to her father's heart. He set down his lamp with a pathetic smile which ended in a sigh. Thus smiling in her bridal dress, she had gone away from him, "*à ma grande désolation!*" Nothing could be more touching than this natural outburst of feeling. He must have felt that it was almost, so to speak, his own fault, who had thrown so much enchantment over the story of monastic institutions; and it might indeed seem as if Providence had exacted a hard price from him for his eloquence and devotion. More deeply than he had any expectation of, he could now enter into the struggle in which flesh and blood, and all the delights of earth, have to yield to spiritual life and its stern duties. Inspired by the unexpected sacrifice which was thus demanded from himself, he wrote the conclusion of the Monks, one of the most affecting utterances of suppressed emotion which perhaps has ever been put on record. After having described some of the many instances in which, in ancient times, young and promising lives were devoted to the monastic life, he adds:—

"Is this a dream? or a page from a romance? Or is it only history, the history of a past for

ever ended? No: once more it is what we behold, and what happens among us every day. This daily spectacle—we who speak have seen and undergone it. What we had perceived only across past centuries and old books, suddenly rose before our eyes full of the tears of paternal anguish. Who will not pardon us for having, under the spell of that recollection, lengthened, perhaps unreasonably, this page of a long-uncompleted work? How many others have also like ourselves gone through this anguish, and beheld, with feelings unspeakable, the last worldly apparition of a beloved sister or child!

"One morning she rises, she comes to her father and mother—'Farewell, all is over,' she says; 'I am going to die—to die to you and to all. I shall never be either a wife or a mother: I am no more even your child. I am God's alone.' Nothing can withhold her. 'Immediately they left the ship and their father, and followed Him.' And lo! she appears arrayed for the sacrifice, brilliant and lovely, with an angelic smile, blooming and beaming, fervent and serene, the crowning work of creation. Proud of her last beautiful attire, bright and brave she ascends to the altar—or rather she flies, she rushes like a soldier to the breach, and hardly able to restrain the impassioned fervour

which consumes her, she bows her head to receive the veil which is to be a yoke upon her for the rest of her life, but which will also be her eternal crown."

We must add that when the first sharp shock of the severance was over, the sacrifice began to bring with it its own gentle recompense. Many of us have known the suffering and sacrifice involved in the transference of a cherished and beloved daughter to be some stranger's wife, the head of a new household, the centre of another family. We call this a happy event, and the other a sad one—but we doubt whether the happy young wife whose very happiness is founded upon her separation from her native home, can remain such a steadfast and sweet consoler to her parents as the gentle young nun, whose human interests still centre in her father's house. Montalembert, at all events, was consoled by the constant tenderness and sympathy of his cloistered daughter; and in the satisfaction of seeing that she had attained the career which suited her best, and was both useful and happy in her vocation, he forgot his own individual disappointment and pain.

Up to the year 1866, he continued able to enjoy society, and to prosecute his work with

all the industry and energy which were natural to him; and the masses of historical material which he accumulated in his many researches are almost incredible. These accumulations, too, were made with order and care—every group of subjects being arranged in its due place, so as to be ready for immediate use, if the moment had ever come to make use of them. They remain still a monument of his laborious zeal, and of the method and power of arrangement which are not always accompaniments of genius; but it is very doubtful whether they will now answer the purpose for which they were so patiently and carefully collected. It was in this mellow evening of his days, before the deeper clouds of suffering had begun to gather over him, that the present writer first made the acquaintance of Montalembert; and the reader may find some interest in knowing what his aspect and manner then were. There is no satisfactory portrait existing of him. The best is a photograph executed in 1862 on his visit to England, by Messrs Maull & Polyblank; but even this, though a sufficiently faithful representation of his appearance to a stranger, is lacking, as photographs almost always are, in that light and shadow, that animation and brightness, which bring the soul into the features. He was not

tall, and at that period he had a momentary inclination towards the fulness of middle age. His eyes were always clear as a boy's, blue and keen, but kind; and his forehead high and open. He had the fresh complexion of an Englishman, along with the more clearly defined and finely-cut features proper to his nation—and his countenance was benign and serene, yet with certain lines of incipient sarcasm about the subtle mouth. The charm of his manners was very great, and yet it was no excess of gentleness which made them fascinating. The most gracious and graceful courtesy, springing from the natural impulses of a heart full of kindness, was yet not sufficient to veil anything that was absurd or foolish from the quick and humorous perception of his keen eyes. His observation was so rapid, and the operation of his mind so instantaneous, that he had often caught an absurdity in conversation before the speech that contained it was completed, and had launched his brilliant shaft of ridicule, filling the room with laughter, and the culprit with bewildered confusion, before the words which had called forth his wit were well said. Never was a more alarming quality to the timid conversationalist, who felt that at any moment he himself, with his stammering incipient foolishness

on his lips, might be revealed in a blaze of sudden light to all beholders, and at the same time to himself, though he probably had not intended to say anything absurd. "The first time I saw M. de Montalembert," says a lady who had met him about the period we refer to, "I was in the seventh heaven of delight and admiration. His manner was so suave and courteous, his reception of all one said so gracious and indulgent, his air so kind, that one's first sentiment was a delighted realisation of that lingering grace of the *ancien régime*, which gives so much superiority to the noble Frenchman, mixed with a sort of adoration for this grand type of chivalrous courtesy, benignity, and consideration for others. But the second time! Mortal terror overwhelmed my soul. My sensation was that I was picked up on the point of his lance, and held up, in all my foolishness, to the smiles (only kept by politeness from being laughter) of the crowd. Afterwards the balance was re-established, and the *fond* of profound and graceful kindness, real amiability of the heart, about which there could never be any mistake, made one willing to risk the chance of being suddenly impaled upon that keen and diamond-pointed spear."

This description is perfectly true; but perhaps

it was only the slow and shy Englishman or Englishwoman, unused to the rapid exchanges of conversation in France, who would have felt it to such a degree. And we must add, that it was chiefly the appearance of false sentiment or fictitious enthusiasm which roused him to this exercise of his power. Simple foolishness might tempt him now and then, but never did Montalembert touch with his airy and brilliant ridicule any weakness that involved real feeling; everything that came from the heart was sacred to him. He was patient with all the details of true sentiment, but on the false he had no mercy.

The rapidity of conversation, however, in a well-educated French circle, trained in all social arts, and endowed with that gift of talk which seems to have found its last refuge in France, is sufficiently confusing to the more timid and deliberate English talker. We remember to have been present at M. de Montalembert's table just before an election to two vacant *fauteuils* in the Academy, to one of which the late unfortunate and distinguished M. Prevost-Paradol was soon after chosen. He was one of the guests on the evening we refer to, and the conversation naturally turned much upon the approaching election. An English lady who was present, and who was evidently little informed on the subject,

asked, with excusable foolishness, whether there were two places vacant, or if there were two candidates for one seat. M. de Montalembert turned to the company, with a gleam of fun in his eye. "Here is an instance," he said, "of the orderly and moderate way in which everything is managed in England. Madame —— takes it for granted that there are but two candidates for the vacant *fauteuil!*" The company laughed unanimously with a sense of the characteristic nature of such a mistake, and of the national difference it demonstrated, and plunged into an immediate discussion of the balance and equal division, the orderliness and constitutionalism, of England; while poor Madame ——, who had meant nothing of the sort, sank into confused silence, finding her faltering explanations quite after date.

When illness prostrated M. de Montalembert, the aspect of the society round him changed, though up to his last moment he never separated himself entirely from his friends. From 1866 his life was full of suffering, often very intense and severe. "I am still in a very sad and precarious state," he wrote in the beginning of 1867, "although there seems to be nothing more to alarm my physicians." From that time, however, he never was able to escape from the

habits and restrictions of invalid life. Sometimes he was well enough to drive out, sometimes he was kept confined to his room or even his bed; and the freedom of ordinary existence, with its inadvertent comings and goings, was over for him in this world. But while his bodily frame sank under so many pangs, his mind was clear and vigorous as ever. During the long lingerings of his illness, it was his custom to receive his friends in the afternoon at a certain hour, with all his old genial kindness and undiminished brilliancy. Perhaps he never shone more in conversation than he did in those moments of intercourse, when, forgetting and desiring to forget his infirmities and pangs, he threw himself in mind into the outdoor world which he had left for ever, and into the interests of others. The benignity of his courtly manners, his delightful power of sympathy and grace of kindness, came out with double force from the background of his weakness and suffering. At first his receptions were held in his library, where, surrounded by all the materials and the evidence of his many labours, seated in his easy-chair or small sofa by the table at which he could no longer work, his ever cheerful looks, and ever animated conversation, made it impossible for the visitor to associate with him any pain-

ful idea or fatal prognostication. During the summer of 1867, when the last great French exhibition was gathering strangers from every corner of the world, and Paris was splendid with royal visits, and all the luxurious pomp of the Empire, never more lavish or more splendid than at that moment—the drawing-room of his house in the Rue du Bac, which had grown to be a kind of anteroom to his presence-chamber, would be full of men whose names have a European fame, waiting for their moment of audience. Even now we seem to see the large cool *salon*, darkened to keep out the afternoon blaze of sunshine and tropical heat, and to hear the low but animated hum of talk, as those who had lived and laboured with him, and to whom his absence made a blank in life, discussed the passing events of which they were conveying the news to him, and the other brethren in arms who had fallen more quickly than he. One such occasion comes vividly before our mind, on which all the conversation was about Cousin, a name so often mentioned in these pages, who was lately dead—he who had helped to train the youth of Montalembert, who had advised and sometimes guided him, who had been one of his foremost opponents in active life, and who now had gone before him into the

world unknown. Within the closed doors which opened now and then to admit or give exit to a visitor, Montalembert sat or reclined, his cheerful countenance lighted up with genial looks of kindness. Not one of his visitors, men in the midst of their lives, could be more interested in everything out of doors than he, or more ready to take up any new subject, to open his mind to all interests. His own condition he would pass over with the slightest mention. Sadly enough that condition pressed upon him when he was alone. It was evident that with the full force of his mind he kept it at arm's length, determined as long as possible to maintain the empire of the soul over the body, and to keep himself in full communion with the living men around. His own great sufferings never made him indifferent to the lesser sufferings of others. He was as ready to sympathise with wounded sentiment or earthly misfortune, as if he had not himself been suffering, without saying anything about it, a daily martyrdom.

There came, however, a time when a still darker and sadder chapter of lingering life followed—when the library and the easy-chair had to be occasionally exchanged for a bed—and the constant attendance of a nurse, even under the pleasant aspect of a soft-voiced and gentle

sister of Bon Secours, made it no longer possible to forget the painful condition of the sufferer. Even then his brightness, his cheerful looks, his love of friendly intercourse remained unchanged; and we recall to our recollection, clear as if it were a fact of yesterday, the manner in which, from this bed of suffering, Montalembert drew from another visitor an account of a community of nuns near Bayonne, living out of doors and cultivating the fields, which he knew would have a special interest for us. His own interest was by that mere fact quickened into warm, sympathetic animation. Never was there a more striking evidence of that vigour and life of the soul which is independent of—nay, almost in antagonism with—the strength of the body. The bed, the nurse, the deepened lines in that thoughtful but always animated countenance —the expression of pain which now and then would cross his features, or the weariness which would drop over them like a veil—all were insufficient to convey to the stranger any impression of real feebleness, or suggestion that a spirit so bright, so courageous and full of life, could be touched by any of the miseries of mortality. Death had nothing to do with such a man. Looking at him, the spectator felt it to be of all things the least credible. He was

an embodied contradiction to that condition of humanity—an assertion of immortality more triumphant than any argument. Physicians might say what they would—we believe that no one could have seen Montalembert in that prolonged and most painful passage out of life without feeling a half-indignant, half-contemptuous inclination to deny the possibility of dying. With such a deathless, brave, bright, and unconquerable individuality, death had nothing to do.

"I have followed him," says M. Cochin, looking at the subject from another point of view, "to the couch where struggling with an obscure but violent malady he turned vainly to medicine, interrogated science, and sought to find help in study and work; but finding in reality no true consolations except those of faith, of conjugal love, and filial piety, he learned daily to take up and carry his heavy cross, accustoming his soul, which was so full of life, to endure the company of a half-dead body, and thus receiving, in the hard experiences of suffering, help from heaven, and a ray of light which fell from Christ Himself. If I speak of this combat —if I open the door which so many friends entered with respect—if I conduct you to that

bed of pain, even at the risk of violating for an instant the reserve of a Christian family—blame me not. I have never seen anything more noble than the constancy and activity of that intrepid soul struggling against tortures so cruel. I am fully warranted in saying that the death of M. de Montalembert was part of his glory."

How resigned and tranquil were his own feelings in the midst of his great sufferings may be seen by the following brief extract from a letter to Mr Monsell, dated February 10, 1869, more than a year before his death :—

"My unfortunate state is just the same as it has been for the last three years. I have no chance, no hope, and I think I may sincerely say, no wish to recover. My only ambition is to get out of this world as soon as possible ; but I am afraid a long time will elapse before I am delivered from my present state of bondage ; *viventi sepulcrum*."

Thus suffering, rejoicing, and sorrowing, Montalembert made his way slowly towards his rest. Two incidents were still to wake up the stillness of his declining days : the one that delusive glimmer of light which shed false illumination and gave vain hope to France before the last

plebiscite which preceded the war; the other the still more serious questions which disturbed the Church of Rome. In respect to the first, he proved triumphantly his own perfect candour and good faith by accepting the concessions of the Emperor, and the apparent approaches he made towards constitutional government, with an anxious desire to make the best of them. Count Daru and M. Ollivier were both his friends; and in the very last months of his life, in a series of brief notes to his Intendant at La Roche, he makes repeated expression of his better hopes. "I received a visit yesterday from M. Emile Ollivier, the new Minister of Justice," he writes on the 5th February 1871, "who is thoroughly satisfied" (*très entrain et très content*) "with all that has passed. Notwithstanding all the rumours to the contrary, not only the Emperor, but also the Empress, are in perfect agreement with the Government. *All goes well.*" His heart was lightened by this last gleam of hope. Notwithstanding that opinion of the Emperor which he had never hesitated to express strongly, he was most willing to believe in his good meaning, and to accept any advance towards liberty.

The other question was more serious and more difficult. It is not yet the time, however, nor do we feel ourselves qualified for the office of

discussing the entire controversy which occupied the late Council at Rome, and which occupied much and painfully, up to his latest moments, the mind of Montalembert. The dogma of Papal Infallibility is, as recent events have made evident, a difficult and puzzling question even to those within the pale of the Roman Church; and it is almost impossible to those without that pale to give any account of it without wounding in some way the religious feelings of the large majority of believers who have accepted the recent decision. The view of the question now held by that faithful and submissive majority is, we believe, as follows: that it was no new doctrine, as many suppose, but only a doctrine which had been left without distinct expression, generally believed in, but never formulised—a point of belief not necessary to salvation or obligatory upon the conscience. Such distinctions as these are always curious and confusing to minds which have been trained to think true conviction the only bond of obligation in respect to doctrine. We are not here, however, expounding our own belief, but that of the mass of Roman Catholics who have acquiesced in the late decision. Nothing can be more curious, indeed, than the manner in which their organs explain away the dogma, which

has assuredly been a stumbling-block to many, till the astonished reader is tempted to inquire why it should have been considered worth while to raise so much commotion in the Church for so very slight an addition to received belief? It was but *une vérité latente, devenue vérité patente*, we have been told; and certainly it is difficult to understand wherein the Papal Infallibility, which we have all our lives understood to be an article of Roman Catholic belief, differs from the Papal Infallibility as proclaimed by the Council of Rome in 1870. Montalembert, however, was one of those who opposed with all his might the proclamation of this dogma. It drew him into print, into publicity, into a last outburst of opposition in the quiet of his ending life. There are various reasons, arising from a want of space and time, and from the very recent occurrence of these events, which make it unnecessary for us to enter deeply into the controversy. Neither do we think it necessary to print here the famous letter on the subject, dated the 28th February 1870, published in the 'Gazette de France,' and afterwards in the 'Times' of the 7th March, which made so much noise in the world, and which unfortunately surrounded with a little haze and heat of controversy the peaceful conclusion of

Montalembert's days. In this letter he explains at length the apparent change of his position, and total divergence of his opinions as an Ultramontane of the old school from the Ultramontanes of the new—describing the former as a party which contended for the spiritual self-government of the Church and its independence of secular control, while the latter were spiritual absolutists, transferring to the ecclesiastical world the traditions of individual and exclusive rule which belong to secular despotisms. "When I read again my words of 1847, I find nothing, or scarcely anything, to change in them," he said. "I feel that did the occasion arise, I again to-day should oppose all against which I then contended, and that I should proclaim now as then the reciprocal incompetence of the Church and State outside the boundary of their proper domain." This, however, which was Ultramontanism in 1847, was, he adds, called Gallicanism in 1870, but that not by any fault of the old and faithful servants of the Church who had fought her battles for years. The divergence from the old paths was on the part of his adversaries, the new Ultramontanes, "represented and personified by the 'Univers' and the 'Civiltà.'" They who had supported and encouraged civil despotism in France, "squandering all our

liberties, all our principles, all our former ideas, before Napoleon III.," were carrying out those principles in the Church with an eager servility with which the champion of freedom could have no sympathy. "Without having even the will or the power to discuss the question now debating in the Council," he concludes, "I hail with the most grateful admiration the great and generous Bishop of Orleans and the intrepid priests who have had the courage to place themselves across the path of the torrent by which we run the risk of being swallowed up." Thus asserting his own fidelity to the cause which had filled his life, and protesting with a wounded and indignant heart against those who, with none of his services to recommend them, had thrust themselves into the foremost place and professed a devotion superior to his, he ended his last publication. Could he have descended into the arena, and fought by the side of Dupanloup, he would have done so; but fighting was over for him in this world—he could do no more.

There is something very painful and pathetic in this letter mingled with the indignation and righteous wrath with which he regards the men who had supplanted him in his well-won position of defender of the Church. These men—the party represented by the 'Univers' and the

'Civiltà Cattolica,' were to the Pope what Goneril and Regan were to Lear. Long before, they had sailed past on full tide of exaggeration and intolerance, leaving such men as Montalembert and Lacordaire stranded on the shore in their honest and genuine devotion. And now that adulation had risen to its last height. Those who were left behind, but who had never been left behind when there was real work to do, or difficulties to encounter, represented the more real love of that humble child, who, while incapable of flattery and unable to make exaggerated professions, was yet the most true and the most tender of her parent. Montalembert in his weakness was like Cordelia. Not one of those who raised the Papal standard to such heights of partisanship had given one-tenth part such proof of devotion and obedience as he who, forty years before, in all the heat and impetuosity of youth had thrown down his arms at the bidding of the Holy See, submitting his pride, his independence, all that he most cared for, to the Papal mandate; and with all the bitterness which the poet's Cordelia must have felt when her treacherous sisters misrepresented her absolute truth, Montalembert thus realised and set forth the position assumed by his adversaries.

We repeat that the question is too recent and too delicate to be handled in detail. These were the last words which the public heard from Montalembert's couch of weakness and suffering; but before we add the following narrative of a still later scene, which may take many readers by surprise, and which critics have already commented on beforehand as an attempt to prove a kind of recantation on his part of the views expressed in his letter, we may be allowed to express our own conviction that Montalembert had not at any time the remotest intention of resistance or rebellion against the Holy See. His letter is in itself an elaborate argument to prove that his sentiments were the same as he had held all his life: and these volumes have been written vainly if the most careless reader has not found in them unmistakable evidences of his unwavering devotion and obedience to Rome, even when her decisions were most against him. There were none of the makings of a Dissenter in him. His conception of the greatness of the Church and her mission in the world was directly contrary to anything that exceeded the limits of constitutional opposition. In all his private letters this confidence in the Church as the one thing stable on earth—the ark, as he himself expresses it, which no deluge can sub-

merge — is the consolation to which he continually returns, his unfailing comfort in all his despondency. We do not believe that any reason, however serious, could have induced him to desert that Church, or to sanction the smallest rent in that long unity of ages, which was his chief and great encouragement amid all the darkness of national prospects, and all the evils which seemed to him ready at a moment's notice to overflow the world.

Having said this, we may add that the following scene was narrated to us personally by an eyewitness, whose perfect trustworthiness is absolutely beyond question. We regret much that we are not allowed to verify the narrative by the name of the witness, which would at once remove all possibility of objection. But this we are not permitted to do. After the publication of his letter, and very shortly before his death, while all the Catholic world was discussing the great question, and speculating as to the results which must follow, one of his visitors put a direct question to Montalembert :—

"If the Infallibility is proclaimed, what will you do?" "I will struggle against it as long as I can," he said; but when the question was repeated, the sufferer raised himself quickly in

his chair, with something of his old animation, and turned to his questioner. "What should I do?" he said. "We are always told that the Pope is a father. Eh bien!—there are many fathers who demand our adherence to things very far from our inclination, and contrary to our ideas. In such a case the son struggles while he can; he tries hard to persuade his father—discusses, and talks the matter over with him; but when all is done, when he sees no possibility of succeeding, but receives a distinct refusal, he submits. I shall do the same."

"You will submit so far as form goes," said the visitor. "You will submit externally. But how will you reconcile that submission with your ideas and convictions?"

Still more distinctly and clearly he replied—"I will make no attempt to reconcile them. I will simply submit my will as has to be done in respect to all the other questions of the faith. I am not a theologian: it is not my part to decide on such matters. And God does not ask me to understand. He asks me to submit my will and intelligence, and I will do so." "After having made this solemn though abrupt confession of faith," says the witness whom we have quoted, "he added, with a smile, 'It is

simple enough; there is nothing extraordinary in it.'"

These touching particulars will convince the reader that Montalembert, though sad and sick at heart, feeling a party to be uppermost in the Church which might undo his own work, yet died faithful to his earliest inspirations, carrying with him to his grave the loyal and unbroken unity of a life which had never faltered from the path of obedience, even when that faith required some sacrifice on his part. It is perhaps natural that we in England, who entertain ideas of Rome and its authority which are so very different from his, should be eager to find out some sign of defection, some mark of what seems to us enlightenment, and deliverance from a very close and sometimes painful yoke of obedience. Yet even the most anxious Protestant may be glad, in the interests of humanity, to see and to allow that this faithful soul was faithful to death, faithful when everything went against his wishes, as well as when everything went according to them. We need scarcely add that in this particular we have doctrinally no sympathy whatever with Montalembert; but humanly we have every sympathy with him. Had he thrown off the bonds

which seem to us unendurable, our intellect would have approved and applauded; but the heart and spirit hold another code.

We turn, however, from this last conflict with a sensation of relief and consolation to the short and simple chapter of domestic life which comes in near the very close of all in a little series of notes to his Intendant M. Silvain, which we have already referred to. These notes are on the subject of the winds, the weather, his sad state of health—nothing more important; but they take interest from the moment at which they were written. In January 1870, Montalembert left for the last time his beloved La Roche. The journey was long and serious, for La Roche is nearly ten leagues from the nearest station on the Paris and Dijon railway; but every arrangement was made for his comfort, and his first letter to Silvain announced his arrival. "I made the journey from the court of the château, to the court of my house in Paris, without leaving the carriage, and without any bad effects," he says. A short time after he writes about the cold, the "black cold," of which his rustic correspondent had complained. "We have the same here," he says; "seven or eight degrees below zero. Imagine what it must be at Maïche, where the house-

keeper writes to me that they have had no difficulty in filling the ice-house." Then, speaking of some trifling rural offences, he adds, "Everywhere there are *délits* and delinquents, everywhere cares and troublesome neighbours; which, however, does not prevent the world from going on its way as always, and probably better than it did before." A little later, writing upon the natural subjects which a proprietor discusses with his steward, he says: "I hate unproductive expenditure. It is because I look upon them as very productive, that I like to hear about our roads through the pine-woods. What you call the rude practical experience of the district is better than all other information, for it is by studying the nature and characteristics of each locality that one learns what it is best to do." In March he enters still more deeply into the business of the estate, giving instructions about the woods and paths, and adding some special orders about the balcony, which was his favourite refuge, and which opened from his own room. Some wasps' nests in the wall had annoyed him, and these he ordered to be destroyed, as they might be again troublesome, alas! "in the long summer days which I may probably pass in La Roche." He adds, however, in his own handwriting to

this letter, "My condition is as painful as possible," and signs himself "your affectionate—Montalembert:" his manner towards his servants and dependants being as tender almost as if they had been his children. At the same time he was very straightforward in his censure when necessary. "Do not say," he writes, in respect to some delinquent, "that this * * * has deceived *us;* say that he has deceived you —you who were at hand to examine into the matter, and to distinguish how it was. I took no part in it, trusting to your experience." Then once more, always friendly, he adds, in his own hand, that the excellent Silvain might feel no sting, "The good Count Daru has been to see me; he spoke of you, and La Roche, and our plantations. He has many cares and *tracas* since he has been a minister. So goes the world. No one is content—everybody complains. As for me, I complain only of having to wait so long for the signal of my departure."

The signal of departure was not much longer delayed. Once more, at the cost of great exertion, Montalembert was able to hear mass in the church of St Thomas-Aquinas, the church of his parish, where he had made his first com-

munion, and where he now received his last. Respecting this day he writes in the journal, which he still kept up to a certain degree: "For the first time since my return to Paris, and indeed since the month of March last year, I dragged myself to mass. I feel only too distinctly how much weaker I am than last year. The distance seemed to me thrice as long, though it is only across the street. After mass was the Holy Communion (which I received with the special purpose of obtaining *resignation*, which I need so much). Returned worn out with fatigue and suffering." After this last public rite, the languor of dying began more and more to steal over him. But up to the very end his energy and intellectual life continued unabated. "Once more a tolerable day" (*journée supportable*), he writes on the 12th March, "notwithstanding the painful moment of getting up and the hours which follow; I can do no serious work, nothing more than writing a letter or two daily." This was his last day in the world, and he still regretted his work. On the last evening of his life, as he crept painfully to his bedroom from his library, he paused to point out to his family certain books which he recommended to them. That night he fell asleep peacefully over a half-completed letter to Dr Newman.

An hour or two before, he had finished one of his gentle and genial notes of admiration and criticism to Baron Hubner upon the life of 'Sixtus the Fifth,' which he had just finished reading. "I have gone over it," he says, "the pencil in my hand," and he points out some errors of the press to be rectified. Speaking of the truthfulness and sincerity of the work, he adds, "At my age and in my state, when one has no longer any ambition but that of entering as soon as possible into the grave which opens before me, you cannot imagine how dearly one appreciates this quality of sincerity, which is so rare in this world, but which we have at least the certainty of being fully satisfied with in the world to come." And even now, on the verge of that grave which he was so fain to enter, the critic and historian were not dead in him; nor was, as the reader will perceive, his confidence in the Church which he loved so much, in any degree impaired. "You have understood and judged the great Catholic reaction of the second half of the sixteenth century with a wisdom and impartiality for which I thank you, in the first place, as a Christian —and on which I congratulate you as being myself a publicist, and also a historian, though of an age more distant and forgotten than that

which you have made to live again. You have not concealed either the shadows or the stains which are inseparable from the human element which is always so visible and so powerful in the Church; and even by this means you bring out all the more clearly the divine element which always prevails in the end, and consoles us by flooding everything with its gentle and convincing light." This letter was prepared to be copied by his secretary next morning, and is dated accordingly by his own hand the 13th March, the day of his death. These were almost his last written words.

Such were the characteristic occupations of his last night on earth. In the morning he woke peacefully, more refreshed than usual by his sleep; but soon after had a sudden seizure, which alarmed his attendants. They sent off in haste for the priest, who came in time to administer the extreme unction; but the doctor only arrived soon enough to ascertain the fact of his death. There was no time for last words, last demonstrations of affection, had such been necessary. He died without pain, praying as long as consciousness remained to him, peaceful as a child whom his father leads into the dark towards his home.

He was buried by his own desire, not among

the gaudy flowers and wreaths of an ordinary Parisian cemetery, but in the hallowed ground at the Picpus convent, where lie the victims of the Revolution, and where only those who are descended from those victims or connected with them can lie. Count de Montalembert had this privilege by right of his wife, and of the noble and saintly ladies guillotined under the Terror, from whom she was descended. He chose his last rest there by the side of the unfortunate —by those who had perished either for the sake of religion, or for their honourable adherence to a fallen cause; as became one who never loved victorious causes—and who fought most of his life on the losing side, after the fashion of the earth's best and purest heroes.

All that was best in France went with him to his grave—all that was best in Europe mourned for him as for a personal loss. The tears are scarcely dry yet that fell on his grave, and his vacant place will be hard to fill up in his country. But, at least, there is one thing at which all who know him will rejoice—that God took him mercifully from the evil to come, and that he did not see the lowest humiliation or the most bitter sufferings of his beloved France.

We cannot refrain from adding here as a postscript two extracts from the juvenile letters of Count de Montalembert, which are at present in course of publication in the 'Contemporain,' and which have this moment reached us. They were written in the year 1827, when he was seventeen; and they read now, after the winding up of his life, like the dim and mystic yet inspired vaticinations of a prophet; accomplished in a different fashion from that which he foresaw, yet nevertheless brought to pass. In the first he anticipates, after a strife more or less prolonged, the triumph of liberty in France, during which struggle he proposes to devote himself entirely to the cause of freedom. But when the moment of triumph comes, says the boy:—

"My position will be changed, for the struggle will be no longer the same. Freedom and the Charter will be no longer the objects of defence, . . . but Christianity, Catholicism, which will be exposed to the attacks of everything that is in opposition to true religion. . . . From that moment I will place myself by the side of the defenders of religion, whoever they may be. Truth is still more important to me than freedom, and my ardour and devotion will

increase, if it is possible, with the importance of the cause which calls them forth. All that I hope for is to be able to show before that fatal crisis how little I fear power, and how much I love liberty. But however that may be, I already transport myself in spirit to the moment when, separated from those by whose side I had fought till then, and misunderstood, perhaps, by my country, I will be confounded with those whose conduct I despise, whose principles I abhor, but who have the cross of Jesus Christ for their standard. This thought saddens but does not discourage me. Titus Livius has said that not only life but honour should be sacrificed to one's country."

The other and final extract we shall make is one which most fitly concludes this record of sentiments which never changed, and of a life full of unity. This is what Charles de Montalembert, seventeen years old, a student at Sainte-Barbe, anticipated and prayed for, as the feelings which should move him at the moment of his death :—

"Let us pray the All-Powerful for each other; that He would give us a good death; that He would conduct us to it through a life which

should please Him; that we may descend into the grave with the consolation of having loved God more even than freedom and our country, and of having loved freedom and our country a thousand times more than life. In praying for ourselves, let us also pray for our beautiful France; let us pray the God of mercy to grant her that freedom which she has bought at the price of so much blood and tears, and to preserve to her that holy religion without which there is neither happiness, glory, nor true freedom."

THE END.

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